

A HISTORY OF JEWISH LITERATURE

VOLUME IV

PART TWO

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FROM 1880 TO 1935

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by

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THOMAS YOSELOFF

New York • London

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THOMAS YOSELOFF, *Publisher*

11 East 36th Street
New York 16, N. Y.

THOMAS YOSELOFF LTD.

123 New Bond Street
London W. 1, England

CARPENTIER

Printed in the United States of America

RT
5008
W323
1960
v. 4:2
MAIN

BOOK VIII
JEWISH LEARNING AND THOUGHT
1880-1935

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CHAPTER IX

BIBLE EXEGESIS AND LEXICOGRAPHY

88a. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The great changes which took place in Jewish life during the period under discussion, and which, as we have seen, affected considerably the development of Jewish literature in the branches hitherto surveyed, both by increasing productivity and by intensifying and improving the quality, also left their impress upon the cultivation and growth of learning and its literary expression which is usually, though inadequately, termed "Jewish Science." Jewish scholarship in its modern form, which is only a century and some odd years old, made exceptional progress in the first fifty years of its existence, namely from the year 1832 when Zunz published his *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge* to the early nineties of the last century. The grand edifice of Jewish knowledge erected by the builders of modern Jewish scholarship and their collaborators, an outline of which was given by us in the preceding volume, is certainly imposing and arouses our wonder. It is enough to mention the works of Zunz, the History of Graetz, and the voluminous works of Steinschneider to be convinced of the enormous amount of labor, energy, and talent invested by the scholars of the first two generations in that branch of Jewish literature. Yet, with all the splendid accomplishments achieved by that literary movement in the first stage of its activity, it suffered from a number of limitations which circumscribed both its quantity and quality, and which were to a large degree removed during the later period.

First, there was the geographic limitation. Modern Jewish scholarship, which arose in Germany, was for a number of decades confined, to a large degree, to the land of its origin, for only a small portion of its activity was carried on in other countries, and these were, as a rule, under the influence of the former. Second, the medium of expression was likewise largely the German language and only to a secondary degree Hebrew. Most of the scholars, even many who did not reside in Germany, wrote their works in that language. Third, the learning

of the first period was mainly the result of the works of individuals. Zunz, Frankel, Steinschneider, and even Graetz made their contributions as individuals and not as members of groups or of centers of learning. There was, on the whole, no concerted effort made during the first five decades to cultivate and spread that type of literature. The Breslau Seminary was founded in 1853, and for twenty years until the founding, in 1872, of the *Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the Rabbinical Seminary of the Reform wing, it was the only center of learning in the field. The *Rabbinerseminar* of the orthodox group was established still later. Likewise was the *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, founded by Zechariah Frankel in 1852 and edited by him and later by Graetz, the only organ of Jewish learning which appeared continuously, while numerous other organs established for the same purpose were short-lived.

All these limitations were removed during the later period. In fact, the increased activity in that direction in Germany proper which took place, as stated, in the sixties and seventies of the last century, laid the foundation for the enlarging of the geographic extent of Jewish learning. Many scholars, trained in the Breslau center, emigrated to other countries and there established centers of learning of their own. Besides, the intensified interest in matters Jewish which had already become evident in the eighties of the last century, and the mass-migration of East European Jews to new lands called forth a corresponding activity in other countries. We note the founding of new centers of learning as well as of organs of literary expression in a number of European capitals. Thus, the *Landes-Rabbinerschule* established at Budapest, Hungary, in 1872, became a flourishing place of learning under Bacher. In France, there was founded in the year 1880 the *Société des études Juives* (The Society for Jewish Studies) which ultimately established the quarterly, *Revue des études Juives*, appearing for the last fifty odd years, and the *École Rabbinique*, both of which were great factors in producing many important works in the French language. Similarly, in England, the Jews' College, established in the fifties (1856), became a center of Jewish knowledge only in the eighties under the leadership of Michael Friedlander and gave an impetus to the cultivation of scholarship in various ways. In 1888 the *Jewish Quarterly Review* was founded, a periodical which appeared for twenty years and around which Jewish scholars from all

countries grouped themselves. In 1893 the Anglo-Jewish Historical Society was organized and gave an additional impetus to Jewish studies. With the turn of the century, a new center of Jewish learning made its appearance, the one in the United States, which was destined, through the change of conditions in Jewish life, to play an important role in the development of learning and literature. The reorganization of the Jewish Theological Seminary under Solomon Schechter in 1902, the transfer of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* to this country in 1910, and several other factors called forth both an extensive and intensive cultivation of Jewish studies in English. Nor did Italy remain long behind. Even in that country where the Jewish population was comparatively small, there occurred a revival of interest in Jewish learning through the establishment of a Rabbinical Seminary at Florence, which offered an opportunity to a number of scholars to produce important works in Italian.

Thus, not only was the geographic distribution of Jewish learning and its literary expression widened, but also the media of that expression became diversified and included all European languages. However, there were more important factors which had conduced to the diversification and extension of Jewish learning. These were the constant rise of Hebrew and its gradual penetration into Jewish intellectual circles of all countries, on the one hand, and the partial realization of Zionism which brought about the establishment of the large new center in Palestine, on the other hand. In fact, these two were, as is well known, closely connected. During the last three decades, Hebrew became a formidable competitor of German in the field of learning. Not only were numerous important works and articles written in that language, but also many valuable works originally written in other languages were translated into Hebrew with additions and notes. The fact that it became a spoken language in Palestine, the establishment of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, and the concentration in the years after the War of large numbers of scholars, writers, and men of intellect in that country gave a great impetus to the pursuit of learning. As a result, the productivity of works in the field of Jewish knowledge written in Hebrew during the last ten years probably exceeds the number produced in all other languages.

The changes which took place during the period under discussion were, however, not all of quantity, but also of quality. Much was

accomplished in this field by the eighties of the last century, but many sources were left unexplored. Libraries were not sufficiently investigated, books of importance were not edited scientifically, and the material at the disposal of the earlier scholars was limited. Likewise, were methods of investigation narrow; certain fixed ideas held sway and influenced, directly or indirectly, the works produced. The extensive progress made by science and learning during the half century, the new ideas which penetrated into both general and Jewish life also affected the advance of Jewish learning and gave it different tone and character. There is noted a general tendency toward precision, scientific detail and particularization, and toward objectivity. However, side by side with the inclination to objectivity, there are currents which direct study in a particular channel, and an effort is made to present views on history, life, and literature from the point of view of a dominant idea. But the greatest factor in the change of quality was the very extension and increase of material in the field. The spread of learning in different countries brought about a greater exploration of libraries, a wider study of manuscripts, and above all, discoveries of new sources of knowledge, such as the *Genizah*¹ in the late nineties, which opened up new sources for Jewish Oriental history, literature, and life, which were undreamed of by the earlier scholars. Again, the settlement in Palestine and the establishment of the University opened new avenues of learning, such as practical archaeology and the study of the nature and geography of the Holy Land, the results of which shed light on many phases of Jewish history, Bible, and Jewish life of the past.

The excessive particularization and attention to detail, while it contributed to greater scientific exactness, lowered the general character of the learning of the period. Too much attention was given to detail and collection of material and too little to construction. Many bricks were collected but few edifices were raised. The last decade, though, brought a perceptible change in this direction, a change that is due primarily to Palestine. There where Jewish life is more intense and literature much closer to it, a need was felt to endow Jewish learning with spirit and with an idea; in fact the national spirit and idea dominant in that country demanded breadth of view and synthesis. Learning in Hebrew shows, therefore, a tendency to construction, and

¹ *Genizah* literally means storehouse. The Cairo *Genizah* was an exceptionally large collection of discarded books and parts of books which were kept in rooms adjoining the Synagogue of Elijah in that city. The late Dr. Solomon Schechter explored this storehouse of Jewish writings in 1897. For more particulars, see Vol. 1, p. 254.

consequently exerts greater influence on life. The scholarly works in other languages evince the impress of particularization and are dominated largely, though there are many exceptions, by a spirit of dryness and detachment from Jewish life and its problems. Such a method is, of course, labeled scientific, but its champions forget that history, literature, philosophy, and allied subjects encompassed within the field of Jewish learning are not sciences in the strict sense of the word as physics, or chemistry, or mathematics, and that they belong primarily to the realm of the spirit. However, of late, a change is entering even in the scholarly literature written in the European languages and the breath of a new spirit is becoming noticeable.

From all that was said, it can be seen that the literature of the period which deals with Jewish learning in all its branches and phases is not only exceedingly extensive but is greatly ramified and diversified. It cannot, therefore, be surveyed in its completeness, and at best we can only note the most important works in the various divisions and indicate the general currents and tendencies.

89. *BIBLE EXEGESIS AND TRANSLATIONS*

The interest of the Jews in the Bible never abated. Consequently, considerable work was done by Jewish scholars in many countries in the field of Biblical studies. The studies embrace all phases of Biblical science: exegesis, translations, introductions, the relation of the ancient versions of the Bible in other languages, such as the Aramaic and the Greek to the Hebrew text, the Apocrypha, and kindred subjects. However, since the Bible and all related subjects are no more the particular province of Jewish learning, and have been for two centuries the object of keen study and research by scholars of all nations who produced extensive literatures in the field, the contributions of Jewish scholars to Biblical learning is unfortunately, with several exceptions, not distinguished by great originality or by comprehensive, all-embracing works. Much that was written in the field is of a fragmentary nature, namely, discussion of particular points and phases of this wide field, and only few savants attempted to produce larger works.

Moreover, the critical attitude toward the Old Testament which prevailed among the Christian scholars during the nineteenth century and which resulted in the shattering of Jewish traditions about the origin, composition, and authenticity of the text of the Scriptures, especially of the Pentateuch, gradually penetrated also the circles of

Jewish scholars, and much that was written in this field of study by them is permeated with this spirit in varying degrees.

Turning to exegesis which forms a leading branch of Bible study, we find, on the whole, two tendencies prevailing, a liberal and a conservative one. The first subscribes in a general way to the results of Biblical criticism, accepts the doctrines which assert that the Pentateuch is composed of various sources written at different times, and posits the heterogeneity of the other books of the Canon. There is no uniformity of view and there are many shades and variations, but on the whole, the critical spirit prevails in the works of the writers of that tendency. The conservative one is likewise not homogeneous and contains numerous variations from a mildly critical to a strictly traditional view, but generally, it is distinguished by a spirit of opposition to the disintegrating results of the school of Biblical criticism.

i. Of the exegetic works written by followers of the liberal tendency, a number are distinguished either by their comprehensiveness or by their insight and penetration into the sense and meaning of the Holy Writ. The first to be noted are two works by Arnold B. Ehrlich (1848-1920), one in Hebrew entitled *Mikra ki-Peshuto* (The Bible in its Plain Meaning) and the other in German, *Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel* (Marginal Notes to the Hebrew Bible). The first is a three volume work which appeared in the years 1899-1901 and covers the entire Old Testament. It is not a continuous commentary on the Bible, but rather a collection of lengthy notes on selected passages. In the introduction the author asserts his independence both of tradition and the exegesis of Christian Biblical scholars and informs us that he will follow his own method in the explanation of the Scriptures which is based primarily on linguistic principles and on an insight into the spirit of Hebrew and its modes of expression. He accepts the documentary theory of the Pentateuch, but does not devote much space to its explanation and merely states, in a few words, that the Pentateuch consists of sections which were written at different times. The same view is referred to occasionally in the notes that certain portions were written later. There is no attempt, though, to emphasize this division into sources and the comments, on the whole, are written from the point of view that the Pentateuch is a distinctly unified work irrespective of the time when that unity was achieved. In spite of his anti-traditional view which he at times likes to emphasize, Ehrlich attributes to the Pentateuch a distinct holiness and a

definite purpose—to teach the Jews the exaltedness of moral conduct and the ways of God. He minimizes therefore the exegetic value of Gentile commentators, for their works, he says, lack the proper reverential attitude towards the books of the Old Testament which they consider only a prelude to the New. Still he rejects the traditional conception of the complete authenticity of the Massoretic text and believes that there are errors in it due to copyists, and he, therefore, allows himself to suggest emendations. However, in this Hebrew work the emendations are not numerous and are made with reserve.

The comments deal mainly with explanation of verses and are distinguished, on the whole, by a fine sense of language and an insight into the meaning of the Bible, but a definite erratic strain is also noted in his exegesis. Whether from a desire to assert his independence or for any other reason, Ehrlich often rejects plausible interpretations of verses by his predecessors and offers peculiar explanations of his own. He is not, in spite of his rationalism, even above inserting numerous far-fetched homiletic comments. The notes deal mainly with the meaning of the verses, but from time to time, the author digresses to take up a discussion of a grammatical point, or the deduction of a moral teaching, or a phase of ancient Jewish life. Very erratic are his quotations from the writings of other commentators. He mentions by name only the standard commentators of the Middle Ages, such as Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and several others, but does not mention the names of modern scholars, merely stating that this comment was made by a Jewish scholar. In the first two volumes he seldom refers to the interpretations of Gentile scholars, but in the third volume, which covers the prophetic and the Hagiographic books he does cite their explanations, but even then rather sparingly.

The *Randglossen* which was published during the years 1909-1913 is a much larger exegetical work and contains six volumes covering, like its Hebrew predecessor, the entire Bible. In his later work, Ehrlich evinces a more radical tendency, inasmuch as the number of emendations he suggests is considerably larger than in the earlier work, nor is he prone, as heretofore, to maintain the readings of the Hebrew Massoretic text, but follows frequently the readings of the Septuagint and occasionally also other versions. He also devotes much space to literary remarks which endeavor to point out the aesthetic and poetic features of certain portions and chapters in various books. Likewise, there are numerous notes on historical and archaeological points.

Judging both works as a whole, we can say that they undoubtedly form an original contribution to Jewish exegesis of the Bible, for the comments are distinguished by keen linguistic knowledge and ingenuity of interpretation. The value of the works, however, is much impaired by the erratic strain noted above which becomes more evident in the *Randglossen*. Numerous emendations suggested by the author are of a peculiar nature and distort the sense of the passages, and similarly far-fetched are many of his explanations. It seems that his almost unnatural desire for displaying originality, which is indicated in the pseudonym, under which the Hebrew work appeared, *Shabtai Ibn Boded*, i.e. the one who dwells alone, was the cause of these aberrations.

ii. An exegetical work of greater importance and extent is the *Perush Madai* ('The Scientific Commentary'), a series of commentaries on most of the books of the Bible, written by a number of scholars under the editorship of Abraham Kahana, published in the years 1904-1930, before the War in Russia, and after the War in Palestine. The work, as a whole, exhibits the liberal tendency and accepts the results of Biblical criticism, but in view of the number of participants these are subscribed to in varying degrees. The participants in this combined effort of Biblical exegesis are the editor, A. Kahana (commentaries on Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Jonah, Haggai, Zachariah, Proverbs, Job, Nehemiah, Koheleth, and Ruth); M. Z. Segal (commentaries on I and II Samuel); S. Krauss (Book of Isaiah); H. P. Chajes (Book of Amos and Psalms); J. J. Weinkop (Books of Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Micah); G. Hershler (Nahum, Esther); D. S. Levinger (Habakuk); Max Margolis (Zephaniah, Malachi); D. Lambert (Book of Daniel); and A. Kaminka (Song of Songs). With the exception of the last commentator, all exegetes share the critical view, though as stated, in varying degrees, for the editor gave to each participant full latitude of expression; and this combined commentary on most of the Biblical books represents not only diversity of interpretation, but also a variety of attitudes and shades of opinion regarding the time, composition, style, and content of the books. On the whole, all the commentaries are distinguished by a genuine Jewish spirit, and no attempt is made to follow blindly the results of non-Jewish scholars whose work in the field is both extensive and intensive. Regard for tradition is shown by the editor in his commentary on the Books of the Pentateuch, for

though the documentary theory is accepted and the various sources are indicated in a number of chapters, this point is not stressed and the indication is more in the form of short notes intended for the scholar, while the commentary proper maintains the integrity of the chapters which are explained as a whole. A freer spirit prevails in the commentaries on the other books of the Canon. Thus, of the sixty-six chapters in the Book of Isaiah, a little over a third is assigned to Isaiah proper, for not only is the theory of a second Isaiah or an unknown Exilic prophet to whom chapters XL-LX are ascribed, accepted, but a number of chapters in the first part (Chas. XXIV-XXVII) are assigned to a date as late as the time of Alexander of Macedon, the end of the fourth century B.C.E., besides other chapters of various dates. Likewise are very few of the Psalms said to be of Davidic origin, and most of them are ascribed to various dates and times, and a considerable number even to the Hasmonean period. With the exception of the Song of Songs, which its conservative commentator assigns largely to a generation after Solomon and only a part to Solomon himself, all other scrolls are given Exilic and post-Exilic dates, and the Book of Esther is entirely deprived of historic significance.

As for the nature and quality of the introductions and commentaries, it can be said that the former, though concise, give an adequate conception of the content, ideas, and teachings of the books, and elucidate the character of the style, while the latter are distinguished by a fine spirit of understanding of the Bible. The exegesis is, of course, greatly influenced by the exegesis of non-Jewish scholars—the degree of influence varies with the individual commentators—but there is a distinct Jewish ring to it inasmuch as extensive use is made of the classic Jewish commentaries, as those of Rashi, Kimhi, Ibn Ezra, and others, and in addition, even the Midrashic interpretations scattered throughout the wide Agadic literature are drawn upon for elucidation of passages. Considerable use is made of the reading of the various ancient versions, but in varying degrees, as the different commentators evince different attitudes towards maintaining the Massoretic readings. Emendations are, at times, suggested, but with moderation. Judging the series of commentaries as a whole, we can say that it is a distinct contribution to Jewish exegesis, for it represents the efforts of a number of distinguished Jewish scholars, whose learning is wide and extensive in many branches, and whose knowledge of Hebrew is

thorough, though we might have expected from several of the commentators more originality and a deeper Jewish spirit in their interpretations.

iii. Another Hebrew commentary covering the entire Bible and written largely in the critical spirit, except for some restraint exercised in regard to the Pentateuch, was composed by S. L. Gordon, (1867-1932). It is primarily a compilation from Jewish and non-Jewish commentaries, but it is well arranged and distinguished by the simplicity and clearness of its style. The commentaries are preceded by well written introductions in which the views of various scholars on the dates, content, and composition of the books are summarized. The commentary was intended primarily for students in secondary schools, and as such it is very popular.

iv. Of the numerous partial commentaries on single books or parts of books, and essays and articles dealing with exegetic matter, there are to be noted the works of H. Torczyner, *Das Buch Hiob*, an analysis and commentary on that book; *Die Bundeslade* (The Ark), a treatise on the place of the Holy Ark in the Old Testament and its relation to the several covenants mentioned in the Bible; and the *Analekten* by Felix Perles. Torczyner follows the method of higher criticism in his exegesis and deals with the text rather freely, making numerous changes and many emendations. In addition, he asserts that both the Babylonian language and tradition exerted great influence upon the formation of Hebrew words and upon the literature of the Old Testament. Perles' notes and comments are devoted primarily to textual criticism. His fundamental idea is that the Masoretic text underwent many changes through copyists. The causes of such changes were abbreviations—in the early texts words were often abbreviated—transfer of the final letters of one word to the next one, change in the script from the old Hebrew to the square letters, or as called in the Talmud, the Assyrian, and similar scribal errors. It is these errors which, in his view, cause difficulty in the interpretation of many passages. He undertakes, therefore, to correct numerous verses according to his theory, especially on the basis of abbreviations which, as he claims, the later copyists did not understand. Some of his suggestions are plausible but many are far-fetched. Besides these works, there may be mentioned other studies of exegetic value, *Proverbia Studien* (Studies in the Book of Proverbs), by H. P. Chajes, and a col-

lection of essays in Hebrew on various Biblical subjects by M. D. Casuto.

While the liberal and critical tendency was to a great extent dominant in the field of Biblical study and exegesis of the period, there also was, as stated, a well defined tendency of a conservative nature, expressed in works which advocated the validity of the sacred books, especially the Pentateuch. That tendency was, of course, like the liberal, of varying degrees, but the common characteristic of all the works of this school was the effort to vindicate the traditional Jewish attitude towards the Scriptures and establish its validity on scientific grounds.

v. Joseph Halévy (1827-1917), the distinguished French Jewish scholar, was the first to react against the theories of the higher criticism of the Bible advocated by the school of Wellhausen, and in his *Recherches Bibliques* (Biblical Researches), a collection of essays, he attacks the hypothesis of the critics with skill and defends the traditional view with sound argument borrowed mainly from philology. The work includes also much exegesis of a number of chapters and difficult passages in various Biblical books. The exegesis is distinguished by a keen linguistic sense and an insight into the spirit of the books commented upon.

vi. Of great importance and a real contribution to genuine Jewish exegesis are the works of David Hoffmann (1843-1921) (Vol. III, Sec. 83), *Die wichtigsten Instanzen gegen die Graf-Wellhausensche Hypothese* (The Most Important Arguments against the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis), published in 1904, and his commentaries on Leviticus and Deuteronomy which appeared in the years 1896-1907. In the first he undertakes to prove the untenability of the Graf-Wellhausen theory, the substance of which is as follows: The Pentateuch, it asserts, or rather the Hexateuch, including the Book of Joshua, is composed of various sources, the principal of which are the Elohist writer who used the name Elohim (E), the Yahovist, the writer who employed the Tetragrammaton (J), the Priestly Code (P), and the Deuteronomy source (D). In addition, there are also secondary sources, one combined from the first two, the writer of which used both names of God (JE), and another one incorporated in Leviticus called the Book of Holiness, which is a subdivision of the Priestly Code. It further assigns different dates to the various sources. J. and E. were earlier collections and existed in early prophetic times; Deuteronomy,

or rather the larger part of it (Chas. XII-XXVI) was composed in the time of Josiah in the year 621 B.C.E. and is the first comprehensive code embracing most of the laws, while the Priestly Code, embracing Leviticus, the larger part of Numbers, and many sections in Exodus, and parts of the early narrative in Genesis was composed in post-Exilic times. One redaction of the Priestly Code was undertaken by Ezra and a still later one in the succeeding generations when the whole Pentateuch was put together by an unknown editor who joined all the sources into one and added many new laws. The theory underwent various modifications at the hands of numerous scholars, each adding a feature of his own, but on the whole, in its main characteristics it held sway in the field of Biblical studies until late when a reaction set in even among non-Jewish scholars.

Hoffmann undertook to demolish the theory and concentrated his attack primarily on the relation of the Priestly Code to Deuteronomy and set out to prove that this Code, contrary to the assertions of the critics, was already in existence before Deuteronomy and that the latter always referred to the former and cannot be understood without it. He starts out by showing that the theory of the critics, which asserts that the priestly book was written in post-Exilic times by priests whose interest was to exalt the cult and emphasize the importance of the Temple, breaks down in several points. The first is, that while we find in Deuteronomy a specific injunction that the Paschal lamb should be sacrificed at the Temple only (Deut. XVI), according to the passage in Exodus XII, 1-20, which all critics agree belongs to the Priestly Code, the sacrifice is to be slaughtered at home. To assume that this chapter was written a hundred or more years after Deuteronomy, argues Hoffmann, is preposterous, for not only is it contrary to the spirit of the Priestly Code as the critics understand it, but it is improbable that a writer who already had the laws in Deuteronomy before him would reverse it after it was in practice for generations, especially when his sole aim was the exaltation of the Temple and its sacrificial cult. The case is different when we assume the traditional view that the law in Exodus was given by Moses as a temporary measure at the time of the Exodus when there was not even the Tabernacle, while the law in Deuteronomy was pronounced by him later as a commandment for the future to be put into effect when the Jews will be settled in Palestine. A similar impossibility is the assumption that the law in Leviticus XVII, also part of the Priestly

Code, which prohibits the slaughter of animals except at the Tabernacle, is post-Exilic, while the one in Deuteronomy which allows such practice is of earlier origin. The law in Leviticus could be explained only from the conditions in the desert when the Tabernacle was in the midst of the camp. In post-Exilic times, when the Jews were scattered throughout the land, such a law would have been preposterous. Besides, argues the author, the style and language of Deuteronomy in regard to this law distinctly shows its dependence upon the passage in Leviticus, and it is evident that the purpose was to permit that which was earlier prohibited.

Hoffmann then turns to the other phases of the theory, and at first proves by numerous analogies of style and similarities of expression that there is no separate Book of Holiness but that there is complete unity in Leviticus and that the Priestly Code not merely emphasizes the cult but is equally interested in ethics and morality, and the critical theory thus loses another of its important props. This is followed by an attempt to disprove another point of the theory, which asserts that the Priestly Code used the priestly laws, stated in Ezekiel (Chas. XL-XLVIII), as a basis for its own laws regarding priests and the cult. Hoffmann shows that this is not the case and proves by comparing style and content that Ezekiel borrowed from the Pentateuch, and not the contrary. True, there are contradictions between the laws in Ezekiel and those in the Pentateuch. However, not only are the contradictions few, but he believes that they can easily be reconciled and, in fact, does reconcile them in his commentary.

After devoting much space to the problem of Ezekiel and proving that Ezekiel borrowed extensively from all parts of the Pentateuch as well as from other famous prophets, and can thus not be considered an original source, he turns to a more detailed analysis of the relation of Deuteronomy to the Priestly Code. He proves by extensive citations and arguments that Deuteronomy cannot by any means be considered the earlier systematic code of laws, as the critics assert, but on the contrary, that it is unnecessarily brief, and that its precepts are often unintelligible, except by references to other places in the Pentateuch which can only be explained by its dependence on the earlier Priestly Code and on other legal sections in the preceding books. The eight chapters which follow these discussions deal with various problems of the Pentateuch, the most important of which are the questions of the institution of priesthood, the relation of the

priests to the Levites, and similar matters. The critics assert that the descent of the priests from Aaron as well as the position of the Levites as second in importance to the priests, as described in the Pentateuch, are all inventions of the post-Exilic writer of the Priestly Code, for say they, Ezekiel did not know of these things. The author proves by a number of arguments that the two orders of priests and Levites and their respective positions existed in Israel long before the Exile, and that the selection of Aaron by Moses and the bestowing of the Priesthood upon him and his descendants is recognized by such an early prophet as Samuel, and is even referred to in Deuteronomy which the critics hold to be the earliest code. With the weakening of this argument the strength of the Graf-Wellhausen theory is greatly shaken, for the view that the Aaronide priesthood is a later institution is a formidable link in the whole chain of its suppositions. Hoffmann does not touch in his work upon the question of the other sources of the Torah, as he considered these phases the most important of the entire theory, and with their fall all the views of higher criticism would lose ground.

One must not conclude, however, that the author endeavored only to prove the earlier existence of the Priestly Code and other parts of the Pentateuch to that of Deuteronomy and that he really conceded that the bulk of the latter was written in the time of Josiah. On the contrary, he stood firmly on the traditional ground that the entire Torah is of Mosaic origin. He further believed that with the fall of the critical theory there would be no reason to disparage the tradition of a nation, and in order to fortify that belief and to show that the very text of the books, if rightly understood, prove the untenability of the critical views, he followed up his first work with the commentaries.

The commentaries, in three large volumes, are likewise written in German, and constitute, as stated, one of the finest contributions to Jewish exegesis, and though they are orthodox in spirit, they are modern and scientific in form and method. Each book is divided into a number of sections according to the content, which usually contains a unified group of laws which are in turn subdivided into smaller groups. It is his belief, relying on a Talmudic statement,² that the Torah was written down by Moses in separate rolls, composed at different times of revelation, and that only at the end of his life, did he unite all the rolls into one without change in the content. Hoffmann,

² Bab. Tal. Gittin 60a.

not wanting to probe into the secrets of God, does not explain why the content was not changed even when a change would have improved it. However, this seems to him to account for the lack of logical sequence in the grouping of the laws. He, however, tries to find as much logical unity as possible. Each section of the books is prefaced in the commentary by an introduction in which the content as a whole is elucidated, the view of the critics positing the different sources of composition refuted and unity vindicated. While the introductions deal to an extent with polemics, the comments on the verses are concerned with exegesis. Much attention is paid to the question of the unity of the oral and the written law, for he endeavors, like the orthodox commentators who preceded him, such as Wessely (Vol. III, Sec. 18), Malbim (Ibid., Sec. 81), and others to point out the derivation of the Rabbinic interpretation of the law from the very words of the verses, and he, of course, does not deviate from that interpretation. In the verses in Leviticus in which the law is different from that in Deuteronomy or in Ezekiel, he reconciles the differences and explains the reasons which brought about the changes in wording. At times he offers reasons for the precepts and attempts to show their rationality; and at other times, he points out the moral and ethical meanings enfolded in the laws. All these qualities place Hoffmann's commentaries among the best of exegetical works of the entire modern period. His polemic work against higher criticism together with the commentaries mark the first and best effort made by traditional Judaism to reply to Biblical criticism which greatly impaired the sanctity of its cherished possession, the Bible.

vii. An important piece of exegetic work and of great value because of the spirit with which it is permeated and the method it employs, is the new edition of the Hebrew Pentateuch and *Haftorot* with English translation and commentary in that language, edited by Chief Rabbi, J. H. Hertz, and published in five volumes between the years 1929-1936. The same work was issued in a one volume edition in the years 1937-1938. The English translations used in the editions are the revised versions of King James translation and that of the Jewish Publication Society of America, respectively.

The merit of this work consists entirely in the commentary and in the additional notes to each book at the end of the volumes, and in the brief introductions to the books. The commentary was written by the following scholars: J. Abelson (Gen. I-XI and Numbers); A.

Cohen (Gen. XI-XXXVII, Exodus XXI-XL, Leviticus, and Deut. I-XVI); G. Friedlander (Gen. XXXVII-L, Exod. I-XX, and Deut. XVI-XXXIV); and S. Frompton who commented the *Haftorot*. The editor wrote the additional notes and the introductions. The commentaries, notes, and introductions are written from the traditional point of view, defending the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, but not without regard to the theories of Biblical criticism and scientific treatment of the content. On the contrary, the apologetic and the polemic spirit is greatly in evidence and the principal purpose is to show that the traditional view can stand the test of criticism and the evidence of archaeological and historical discoveries. The apologetics and polemics are emphasized mainly in the additional notes while the commentaries are devoted primarily to exegesis and the inculcation of religious and ethical teachings of Judaism as derived from various passages and sections of the Pentateuch. The commentaries, though they consist mainly of selections of comments from the exegetic works of Jewish commentators of all ages as well as of selected works of non-Jewish scholars, yet evince great skill in the selection of the proper interpretations, in the method of presentation, and in the harmonizing of the individual interpretations with the general spirit. Especially praiseworthy are the efforts to remove all difficulties in certain expressions which caused critics to ascribe portions to later dates, as well as to attempt to reconcile Biblical accounts of events with modern views. Thus, the six days of creation are explained as epochs, for the days of God comprise thousands of years. The words *Shammayim* and *Erez* in Gen. Chap. I, 1 are taken merely as symbols of that which is above and which is below respectively, as otherwise a contradiction arises, for the firmament called heaven was created, according to verse 8, on the second day. Likewise are the "waters which are above the firmament" interpreted as referring to mists and clouds that descend upon the earth in the form of rain. At times resort is made to allegory but in proper proportion, as in the story of the serpent tempting Eve, upon which the commentator remarks, "The gliding, stealthy movement of the serpent is a fitting symbol of the insidious progress of temptation." He thus hints that the whole story is to be taken symbolically. Special attention is given to passages which are vulnerable from a critical point of view and much skill is displayed in their interpretation in agreement with the traditional view. Such effort is evident in the explanation of the two names of God, the differences in the stories of creation, or

in the narratives of the flood. However, here and there, concessions are made to modernity, as in the introductory comments on the Table of Nations, the exegete remarks: "The principal races and peoples known to the Israelites are arranged as if they were different branches of one great family." As said, emphasis is laid upon derivation of moral teaching, and the exaltedness and holiness of the laws are carefully pointed out.

Equally valuable are the notes at the end of the books which are in reality a series of short essays on important Biblical subjects. The notes to Genesis deal with the originality of the Jewish view of creation, its conciliation with the modern view, the institution of the Sabbath, the fall of man, and the unity of the book. The writer points out the pure monotheistic conception of creation in contradistinction to the Babylonian account which is polytheistic and fragmentary, and consequently there could be no borrowing. There is even an attempt at a rapprochement with the theory of evolution for the writer suggests that the words, "God formed man of the dust of the ground" (Gen. II, 7), may be interpreted that *dust* denotes the lower animals from which man evolved. This, however, is somewhat far-fetched. The writer denies the Babylonian origin of the Sabbath and points to the difference in kind between the Biblical Sabbath and the Babylonian sacred day. As for the story of the fall of man, he asserts that it is to be taken allegorically, and that its main purpose is to emphasize the gravity of sin and the power of passion, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the power of the human will to repent and desist from evil. In regard to the story of the flood, the writer admits that it belongs to a common Semitic stock of stories, but emphasizes its pure ethical content as against the legendary character of the Babylonian account. Quite dexterously does he polemize against the documentary theory. He endeavors to prove that the differences in the versions of creation and the flood are only apparent. Nor, says he, does the use of the two names of God in different sections prove the composite character of the book, for such use can be explained, and he cites many scholars who contest the validity of the proof.

The notes to Exodus deal with the historicity of the Exodus, its date, the plagues, the value of the Decalogue, and the relation of the Mosaic laws, contained in chapters XXI-XXIII, to the Code of Hammurabi. Especially valuable are the essays on the Decalogue, its teachings and influence, and on the relation between the two codes.

The writer shows the differences between the Mosaic code and that of Hammurabi, but admits that there are, in some respects, similar features which are due to the common usage of the Semitic ancestors of both the Babylonians and the Hebrews.

The notes to Leviticus comprise several essays dealing with refutation of the critical theory of the post-Exilic date of the book, the spiritual meaning of the sacrifices, and the attitude of the prophets to sacrifices. With great ability does the writer amass the arguments of the conservative scholars, such as Hoffmann, Jacobs, and others against the critical theory of the book and vindicates its antiquity. References are also made in the essays to ancillary problems, such as the view of Ezekiel on the duties of priests, sacrifices, and the Temple cult, and the place of the Day of Atonement in the Pentateuch and in other Biblical books.

A fine series of essays is appended at the end of Deuteronomy, touching on various subjects, as the reciting of the *Shema*, reward and punishment, Jewish education, monarchy in Israel, marriage, divorce, the position of the woman in Judaism, and finally the Mosaic origin of Deuteronomy.

The work, as a whole, is a noteworthy contribution of Jewish scholarship to the exegesis of the Pentateuch and a valuable effort to vindicate the traditional point of view which is carried out with skill and ability.

viii. Of the number of partial commentaries written with a conservative tendency there is to be noted the *Hikrê Mikra* (Studies in the Bible) by David Yellin. It consists of exegetic notes on the Book of Job. The work is distinguished by a keen linguistic sense and attention is paid to the literary and poetic qualities of the book. It elucidates many difficult passages and expressions, especially by discerning new usages of Hebrew words unsuspected by earlier commentators and philologists.

ix. There are a number of works which, though not directly exegetical, yet as they deal with an important phase of Biblical study, namely the question of the origin, unity, and date of the Pentateuch and other Biblical books, they indirectly contribute much to the understanding and explanation of the Bible. Of such works written in a conservative spirit, those of Harold Wiener (1875-1929) are the most important. Wiener was a lawyer by profession, and being interested in comparative law, he also examined the legal system of the Penta-

teuch. This brought him in contact with Biblical studies and with the various critical theories about the origin of the Pentateuch. He became convinced that the critical view is untenable and devoted himself henceforth to the refutation of the well-known documentary theory, championing the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch and its unity in a most vigorous way. He wrote numerous essays on the subject which were collected in a number of volumes, the most important of which are: *The Origin of the Pentateuch*, *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, *Pentateuchal Studies*, and *Studies in Biblical Law*.

In all these works he attacks the various phases of the critical view from several angles, chief of which is that of textual criticism. The gist of his view is that the entire Pentateuch was written by Moses, but that the Hebrew text, usually called the Massoretic, is not perfect. In the course of its transmission through the generations, there crept in, through copyists, numerous errors, omissions of words, and additions or repetitions, as well as glosses, originally written in the margin. It is these many changes which constitute the source of the difficulties and discrepancies on which the critics base their theories of different sources written at various dates. He proves his point of the imperfection of the Massoretic text by the different readings found in the older versions, such as the Septuagint and other translations in the same language (see Vol. I, Sec. 62), the Syriac translation, known as the *Peshitta*, and the Samaritan Hebrew version. These translations and versions, argues Wiener, are all older than the Massoretic text, and consequently their readings are to be preferred, and this proves that the original Hebrew text was somewhat different from the Massoretic and did not contain many of the difficulties and discrepancies which serve the critics so well. He adopts the readings of the versions and shows that in this way he obviates a large number of the difficulties, and thus the critical theory is invalidated.

The matters are technical and cannot be surveyed, but one or two illustrations will help us to understand the method. One of the fundamental arguments of the critics, produced as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, for their view that the Pentateuch consists of different sources, is the fact that the two names of God, Elohim and the Tetragrammaton (JHVH) are constantly interchanged in chapters and passages. They therefore assign, as stated above, different passages to the sources E. and J. Wiener argues that this is no proof, for besides the fact that one writer could employ two divine names, both of which

were prevalent at the time, in accordance with the content, we find, if we consult the versions and translations, that the use is not consistent. Thus of the one hundred seventy-seven verses where in the Massoretic text of Genesis the Tetragrammaton is used, various versions substitute Elohim in one hundred and eighteen of these verses. Again, of the one hundred and seventy-nine verses where Elohim is used, the versions read in fifty-nine of them the Tetragrammaton. This proves that in the original text, the use of the names of God was more uniform and that changes occurred for specific purposes, and consequently, the names of God in the Massoretic text constitute no criterion of compositeness. Another striking example is the following. Critics, in order to strengthen their view of the post-Exilic origin of much of the Pentateuch, especially the Priestly Code which embraces Leviticus and much of Numbers, point to the differences in the statements regarding the priests and Levites found in that code and in those of the other books of the Bible. Thus in Judges XVII, 7, we read: "And there was a youth from Bethlehem Judah, of the tribe of Judah, and he was a Levite and he sojourned there." This, argue the critics, proves that the office of the Levite was a profession and did not involve descent from the tribe of Levi as it is stated in the Priestly Code, for such descent was only a later invention. Wiener proves that the Septuagint omits the words "from the tribe of Judah" and only has "from Bethlehem Judah," which means that the youth was a Levite who resided in Bethlehem, and thus one of the props of the critical views falls to the ground.

He applies the test of textual criticism to numerous passages which present difficulties and in many cases he is successful in removing them, though his theory about the imperfection of the traditional Hebrew text is hardly tenable. We have before us a peculiar case. The critics, who dissect the Pentateuch mercilessly, champion the genuineness of the Hebrew text, while Wiener, who calls himself an orthodox Jew, thinks that it is imperfect.

Much as Wiener employs his textual criticism as a means of attack against higher criticism, it is not the only weapon in his warfare against its views for they are based on different grounds. He attacks the view of difference in style advocated by the champions of Biblical criticism, and besides arguing that slight variation in style is by no means a criterion of different authorship, he advances numerous similarities of style in the supposed different sources. He also advances

arguments from the content of chapters which prove the incongruity of ascribing them to post-Exilic or other later dates, since the data given in these chapters hardly apply to the conditions of later times and could only refer to the Mosaic age. But his most important contribution is his argument from the legal angle. With great skill he invalidates the contention of the critics based upon the discrepancies between the laws of Deuteronomy and those of Leviticus and Numbers which prove, according to them, different dates of composition. He analyzes the nature of the codes and shows that they really supplement each other and that Deuteronomy depends on Leviticus, and similarly removes many other difficulties.

The works of Wiener did not entirely overthrow higher criticism as he expected, nor can he be considered thoroughly Orthodox from the Jewish point of view. He differs on many points with tradition, especially on the question of the genuineness of the Massoretic text, and also makes a concession here and there which tradition would hardly approve. Still, his arguments made a dent in the theories of higher criticism and helped to bring about the reaction against it which has set in of late. His work, permeated by a spirit of zeal for Jewish belief in the Mosaic origin and the unity of the entire Pentateuch, forms a valuable contribution to Jewish Biblical studies.

x. Another work of importance which likewise rejects the current critical theory of the post-Exilic date of parts of the Pentateuch and advocates the retention of the traditional view, namely that it dates in its entirety from Mosaic times, is that of A. S. Yahudah, entitled *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to the Egyptian*. Thus far, only the first volume, which is devoted to the Book of Genesis, has appeared. In this work, the author, who is a thorough Semitic scholar and also an Egyptologist of note, throws light on the question of the antiquity of the Pentateuch from another angle by comparing the language and the content of the Pentateuch with the Egyptian language, conceptions, customs, and manners. Though, as the title indicates, emphasis is laid by the writer on the linguistic phase, yet the discussion is by no means limited to philology, but embraces many kindred subjects. The writer proves that not only do we find in Genesis a considerable number of loan words borrowed directly from the Egyptian, but that numerous Hebrew expressions, construction of sentences, and phrases conveying definite concepts cannot be understood or explained without reference to similar expres-

sions and concepts in Egyptian. Moreover, the story of Joseph shows such an intimate acquaintance with court life and manners in Egypt that we have to assume that it was written by one who lived in that land, and that the people for whom it was intended understood all the implications. Likewise, he proves the great influence of Egyptian concepts on a number of expressions in the creation and flood stories which, according to the higher critics, are so closely related to the Babylonian records. Yahudah asserts that this supposed relation is in reality slight, limited more to common words which are found in the Hebrew and in the Babylonian versions as well as to several other features. He furthermore avers that these words and features point to the pre-patriarchal period, to the time when the Hebrews still lived in Mesopotamia. The Egyptian influence, says he, on the contrary, is much greater and points to the time of the sojourn of the Jews in Egypt. Similarly does he demonstrate the existence of Egyptian influence in the stories of the Patriarchs as well as in the story of the birth of Moses. From all the data collected by the author bearing on numerous phases of the language and the content of Genesis, he comes to the conclusion that the book could not have been written at any other time save at the time of the Exodus and by one who not only lived in Egypt but was thoroughly acquainted with the language, literature, manners, and culture of that land. The hypothesis, which assigns portions of that book to post-Exilic times (those from the source P.) and other portions to writers of the eighth century B.C.E., is, in his opinion, entirely invalid.

xi. While the preceding work combats the critical view of the origin and composition of the Pentateuch, A. Kaminka devoted a number of essays in German, French, and Hebrew to combating the views of the critics on the composition of other Biblical books, especially that of Isaiah and the Psalms. His French essays on the Book of Isaiah were collected in a volume under the name of *Le Prophète Isaïe* and published in the year 1925. His Hebrew essays under the title *Mehkorim* (Studies) were published later. Kaminka represents an extreme conservative tendency even among Jewish scholars, for almost all of them accept the division of Isaiah into two books, the second of which (Chas. XL-LXVI) is ascribed to an unknown Exilic prophet; and likewise do many of them admit the late date of numerous Psalms ascribing a number even to Maccabean times. He rejects both

views. In the French book, as well as in the Hebrew essays, he defends vigorously the unity of the Book of Isaiah and its entire authorship by that prophet. He admits only a few additions from later times, especially the verses which mention the name of Cyrus (XLIV, 28; XLV, 1). He reproduces the arguments of earlier scholars, the improbability that the name of such an illustrious prophet as the second Isaiah should have been forgotten, and the antiquity of the view of the unity of the Book as evidenced by the testimony of Ben Sira who lived about 200 B.C.E., and adduces many more. He claims that the universalism manifested in Chas. XL-LXVI does not correspond with the Exilic times when there was an effort to make national distinctness as strong as possible. It fits, argues he, rather into the scheme of the thoughts of Isaiah who uttered the prophecies of eternal peace and of the ushering in of the Kingdom of God. He denies that verses in these chapters contain references to the return from Babylon and interprets these verses in a manner which resembles allegory or symbolism. But his strongest argument is from the analogy of style in both parts of the book. He adduces numerous similarities of usage which overbalance the differences. Besides, he attempts to show that Jeremiah and other late pre-Exilic prophets had already used phrases borrowed from these chapters. On the whole, he makes a vigorous attempt to prove his view, yet it is not entirely convincing and many of his interpretations of verses are far-fetched.

Kaminka presents a better case in his essays on the Book of Psalms, assigning the entire book to pre-Exilic times, though not wholly to the time of David. He further asserts that many of the Psalms belong to very early times, and a large number to prophetic times, and claims that the prophets, such as Isaiah and others, borrowed expressions, phrases, and even ideas from earlier Psalms. He admits, however, that here and there, verses and passages were added in late pre-Exilic and early post-Exilic times. On the whole, his view that the bulk of the Psalms dates from early times, and that there are no Maccabean Psalms in the book, has much in its favor, but his pedantic insistence on drawing the line with the Exile and arguing that even Psalm CXXXVII, beginning, "On the rivers of Babylon there we sat and wept," was composed before the Exile, is hardly tenable. His interpretation of the Psalm as a war song and not as a plaintive song of captives is ingenious but closer to homiletics than to exegesis.

90. BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

The numerous translations of the Bible into different European languages, which were made by various scholars in the preceding period and which were noted by us in Vol. III, curtailed for a time the activity of Jewish scholars in this direction in the period under discussion. Only here and there, individual scholars in different countries offered new translations of single books. However, in the last two decades, several translations of the entire Bible into two European languages, German and English, were undertaken by groups of scholars. These are first, the Bible translation into German by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig which aimed primarily at excellence of diction and clarity of expression, as well as emphasis of the Jewish point of view in the rendering of verses; second, the one undertaken by the Jewish community of Berlin and edited by N. Torczyner with the collaboration of a group of scholars. The translation was not completed, and thus far only the Pentateuch and the books of the First Prophets (Joshua to II Kings) have appeared. The latest events in Germany prevented the completion of the undertaking. In this translation there is embodied much of the newer exegesis, and many difficult verses are clarified by interpretation, the result of deep study in the last five decades. The third is the translation of the entire Bible into English undertaken by the Jewish Publication Society of this country and prepared for a number of years by a group of scholars under the supervision of a board of editors headed by the late Max Margolis. The translation represents an achievement in Biblical exegesis and is important from many angles. We will have more to say about its nature, character, and specific value in the proper place.

91. INTRODUCTIONS TO THE BIBLE

i. There were only two introductions to the Bible written by Jewish scholars during the period, a partial one in German by L. Blau, entitled *Zur Einleitung in die heilige Schrift*, published in 1894, and a four volume book in Hebrew, *Mebo le-Kitbé ha-Kodesh* by S. Bernfeld. The first, as said, is more of a collection of essays of an introductory character than an introduction in the proper sense of the word. It deals primarily with external matters relating to the Bible, but does not analyze the content or discuss the dates of the books. The essays discuss the names current among the Jews for the designation

of the Scriptures, their connotation, and meaning; the problem of the script of the Old Testament, that is the change from the old Hebrew script to the square or the Assyrian; and finally questions bearing upon certain phases of the text, especially those which have to do with Massoretic notations. Of special importance are his conclusions that the old Hebrew script gave place to the square characters gradually and that for a long time certain books of the Bible were written in that script, even as late as early Tannaitic times. He further asserts that there were also Bibles which were written in Hebrew but in Greek characters, or even in characters of Persian and other languages current in the East.

ii. Bernfeld's work is imposing in quantity, for its four volumes contain close to two thousand pages and is very extensive in scope. It is a veritable introduction not only to every book in the Bible, but to the entire ancient Hebrew literature, as it includes the Apocrypha, essays on the early versions of the Bible, translations, and similar matters. It is arranged in the following manner. The first volume is devoted to the Pentateuch and a brief analysis of the narratives in other books of the Bible. The second volume deals extensively with the historical books—from Joshua to Chronicles—and with the prophetic books. The third volume contains a detailed analysis of the Hagiographa, a survey of the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic books, and a number of essays dealing with the language and style of the Bible, ancient versions, and religious institutions as the sacrifices, the festivals, and other matters. The fourth volume is devoted entirely to essays on Biblical subjects, such as the Jewish concept of eschatology, the political views of the prophets, parables and figures of speech in the Bible, the authenticity of the Massoretic text, and kindred topics which elucidate various phases of the Canon. The work is, therefore, distinguished by its embraciveness and completeness, for there is hardly a point in the wide field of Biblical study which is not touched upon or referred to by the author.

The case is different with the quality of the work. It undoubtedly displays extensive erudition and a thorough knowledge of the entire field of literature dealing with Biblical subjects written both by Jewish and non-Jewish scholars. But unfortunately, that extensive mass of knowledge accumulated by the author during many years, is not utilized by him in a critical and systematic manner, nor is the work permeated by that spirit of love for and reverence toward the Bible,

the most cherished possession of the Jew, which we would expect a Jewish scholar to be imbued with. It is not the critical or radical point of view from which this work was written which testifies to the lack of that spirit, but the carrying of such view to extremes, the nonchalant sweeping away of all traditions without a qualm of conscience, the hypotheses propounded and assertions made without solid and sound proofs, which bear evidence to it. The author is not satisfied with dividing the Pentateuch into the usual four or five sources accepted by higher criticism, but practically shatters it into fragments which were joined time and again by various editors. It is not enough for him to deny Mosaic origin to the larger part of the five books, but he categorically denies that any part of it was written by Moses or even in his time (Vol. I, p. 211). In fact, he is even doubtful whether Moses existed altogether and only after great reluctance does he concede that there is an historical modicum in all the legends about him and that possibly there was in later times in Palestine a prophet by that name.

On account of the bulk of the work and also because of its rather unsystematic method of presentation, it is impossible to summarize its content, and we will therefore touch only upon its most salient points. The author does not base himself entirely on the documentary theory of the critics which uses the different names of God as the principal criterion for distinguishing between sources, and admits that this criterion lacks validity. He relies chiefly upon the analysis of the content of the parts of the Bible and on literary criticism, but he accepts in principle the existence of separate collections of narratives and laws, composed in different times and places, chiefly in Ephraim and Judah. He is, of course, not averse to the theory that the Ephraimitic collections used Elohim, while those of Judah used the Tetragrammaton, but he does not take it as the main basis and allows for deviations. As a result of his analysis he divides the Pentateuch into two divisions, the narrative-historical part and the legal part. The first covers all of Genesis, the larger part of Exodus, portions of Numbers, and the first twelve chapters of Deuteronomy; the second, all legal portions in Exodus, the whole of Leviticus, parts of Numbers, and Deuteronomy (XII-XXVI). In the narrative part he distinguishes three elements: (a) historical traditions or legends; (b) poetic creations; and (c) Midrashic interpretations and extensions. With these as criteria, he proceeds to analyze the whole narrative material

of the Pentateuch. The earliest of these narratives are the stories of the Patriarchs which were current in diverse versions in Ephraim and Judah. In other words, there were cycles of stories about the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob which were joined together several times, and as a result the chapters XII-L in Genesis bear the marks of various authors, but they present early material with later additions. He is not specific about the times of their several arrangements, but says that the larger part of Genesis was already known during the time of the early kings of Israel. To these stories which constituted the early Hebrew history, there were added the first twelve chapters which speak of creation, the flood, and other matters of general history. The addition was made during the Babylonian exile, for not only does he see in the story of the creation the influence of Babylonian sources but also of Persian. He likewise claims that the story of the flood was not known to the prophets. The first mention of the flood is in Isaiah LIV, 9, but that, of course, belongs to the second Isaiah.

The Exodus narratives are again divided into cycles and are said to be composed of different sources joined by different editors. The Moses cycle our author considers mainly a poetic creation, the nucleus of which consisted of a very simple story about a leader. The Exodus group, though its nucleus is of earlier origin, contains many embellishments and interpretation of events by later hands. Likewise, he asserts that the narratives about the crossing of the Red Sea and the descent of the *Manna* are of the period of the Exile, and the main argument is *é silentio*, namely that the prophets, with the exception of Isaiah LXIII, 12, 13, do not mention the crossing of the Red Sea, but again, this belongs to the Exilic prophet. Nor does he spare the most sacred story, that of revelation, and does not allow it authenticity and antiquity. In that he differs with many followers of higher criticism. He again points to the argument that revelation at Sinai is not mentioned by the prophets until Malachi and Nehemiah, both of whom lived during the time of the Second Temple, when the stories were already arranged and were joined to certain legal portions of the Pentateuch. Along with the story of revelation go the stories of the golden calf and the entire description of the erection of the Tabernacle. As for the golden calf, the proof is the silence of the prophets while the description of the Tabernacle belongs to the author of Leviticus who lived even later than the time of Nehemiah. Similar dispositions are made of the narratives in Numbers; the strife of Korah and the

story of the sending of the spies are relegated to periods later than Nehemiah merely on the basis of the oft-used argument *é silentio*. The only concession made is for the Balak and Balaam narrative (Num. XXII-XXIV) which he assigns to the time of David.

As for the legal part of the Pentateuch, the earliest portion of it is the "Book of the Covenant" (Ex. XX-XXIII) which contains the most important civil laws and also the principal religious and cult laws. This book in its first version our author assigns to the time of the Judges. That it underwent several editions goes without saying. However, Bernfeld calls it the Book of the Covenant only because the critics call it by that name, but he does not admit that the covenant between God and Israel as told in Ch. XXIV really belongs to it, but is of later origin. Another version of the religious laws he finds in Ex. XXXIV, 6-26 which is also early. Besides these early groups of laws, he says that undoubtedly there were other collections, but no attempt was made to standardize them until the year 621 when King Josiah found a portion of the present Book of Deuteronomy and made a covenant with the people to observe the laws. This is, according to our author, the first real covenant in which the people assumed an obligation to observe them. Soon afterwards, the body of the Book of Deuteronomy (XII-XXVI) was put into writing and standardized as the Torah. Only during the Babylonian exile when the narratives of Genesis and the greater part of Exodus were edited, were the first eleven chapters, the historical portion, added to Deuteronomy; they briefly survey the events in the desert and the revelation, including the Ten Commandments. Ultimately the final chapters were added in which the covenant Moses made with the Jews before his death is mentioned. Thus, only after the various parts were consolidated, did the conception of the Law of Moses (Torat Mosheh) grow up so that Malachi could speak of the Torah.

However, the Torah at that time still lacked a great part of what the critics call the Priestly Code, embracing Leviticus, portions of Numbers, and Exodus. This code was gradually developed, standardized, and consolidated during the first centuries of the Second Commonwealth in the following manner. The first version of a Priestly Code, wherein laws regarding the functions of priests and sacrifices are contained, is found, according to the author, in Ezekiel, Chas. XL-XLVIII. This Code underwent modifications for a few generations until in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah a second version was composed which was

joined to Deuteronomy and the other books of the Pentateuch. But since the development of the cult in the subsequent generations and the concentration of power in the hands of a priestly family, called the sons of Zaddok, increased the power of the priests, these, in order to exalt the importance of the sacrificial cult, made constant additions to the Priestly Code which tended to standardize the sacrifices and the ritual and even to supply ancient origins for new rites as well as for the descent of the priests. And thus there resulted at the end of the Persian rule, around the year 330 B.C.E., a new and enlarged version of the Priestly Code which is the one we now possess. Furthermore, in order to harmonize the new version of the code with the older portions of the Torah, the authors of that version undertook a kind of revision of the entire work, adding verses and chapters in earlier parts, even in Genesis, and this revision gave the final touches to the books and were thus handed down to posterity. Bernfeld, though, is not averse to assume that there may be slight additions even of later times, but these are insignificant.

These are, in brief, the principal views and hypotheses of our author regarding the composition and origin of the Pentateuch which shatter every Jewish tradition and which turn it from a unified work of Mosaic origin into a mosaic of numerous small parts, hailing from different lands and times. What is remarkable about the author is that he not only makes his assertions with indifference as if entirely unconscious that he is undermining the ancient beliefs of a people, but he pronounces his radical views with overconfidence and a kind of categorical certainty overlooking the fact that each point is contested by many scholars and is a subject of controversy among the learned. Of course, he offers proof for his assertions and he also buttresses the opinions given in the text by essays on the development of fundamental religious institutions referred to in the Pentateuch in which he endeavors to show their late origin. The proofs, though, are not convincing as they often partake more of the nature of premises than actual demonstrations and the basis of many an argument is very slender. This is not the place for a detailed analysis of the arguments and we will merely point out one or two fundamental errors.

To posit that throughout the period of the First Commonwealth, which lasted about seven hundred years, the role of Moses as a leader and law giver was entirely unknown—the references to Moses by Micah and Jeremiah he considers as late additions—but that suddenly during

the fifty years of the Exile there developed a complete conception of his personality and his role of leadership, and that a large part of the Pentateuch was composed in that short span of time and ascribed to him, resulting in a *Torat Mosheh* which was considered even by that generation as most sacred, is, to say the least, not only untenable but preposterous. In fact, he is honest enough to confess that he cannot explain this rather peculiar phenomenon. Still that does not prevent him from arguing against many non-Jewish Biblical scholars of note, such as Kautsch, Kittel, Gressman, and others, who assert their belief in the historicity of Moses and his activity. The following instance will serve as an illustration of the author's method of proof. He asserts in three places that the sections in Exodus XII, 1-20, 43-49 and Deuteronomy XVI, 3, 4, dealing with the Paschal lamb and the prohibition to eat leavened bread on Passover were inserted later, around the year 412 B.C.E. His sole reason for such assertion is that in the Elephantine Papyri, discovered recently, there is a letter written by one Hānnani to the Jewish colony at Elephantine, Egypt, urging them to observe the Passover and to abstain from eating leavened bread. That the converse can be true, namely that Hānnani merely reminds the distant Jews of the approach of Passover and incidentally quotes to them the old law of the Torah, does not occur to our scholar.

The same method is followed by him in regard to other Biblical books, the discussion of which occupies more than six hundred pages. The tendency to shatter them into fragments and to ascribe large parts to later dates, especially to the Babylonian Exile and to the dark period in Jewish history, the two centuries of Persian rule, is quite in evidence. Thus, asserts Bernfeld, the Book of Joshua is composite and while it contains some historical portions, the greater part of it is Midrash and poetic fiction, and its final arrangement took place at the end of the Persian rule; the Book of Judges is more historical and consists largely of early collections of data, but as all books it contains many later additions from the hands of the editor at the end of the Persian period. The Books of Samuel also contain much earlier material of several sources; the stories in I Samuel are primarily from the Ephraimitic source but were edited later with additions, while II Samuel is Judaistic and was compiled around the end of the First Commonwealth. The Books of Kings are also composed of several sources with additions from the time of the Second Temple. Coming to the Books of the Prophets, the author asserts that some of these books contain a collection of prophe-

cies which are separated by an interval of six hundred years. Thus, in the Book of Isaiah he assigns to the First Isaiah of the 7th century B.C.E., a total of thirteen prophecies, while he dates other prophecies in the same Book from the time of Alexander Jannai (106-78 C.E.). The books of the other prophets he is forced to admit are of a more unified character. Similarly, the Book of Psalms is a composite work by many poets. But while this view is acceptable even to many conservative scholars who assign a number of the Psalms to various poets during the First Commonwealth, and only some to David, our author assigns all Psalms, with the exception of two fragments, to poets who lived after the Babylonian Exile, and not a line to David. That there are Psalms from later Hasmonean times is a certainty to our author. In this manner he analyzes the parts of the other books of the Hagiographa. As for the final fixation of the Canon, he relegates it, on the basis of certain Talmudic statements which he interprets in his way, to the middle of the second century C.E. This, of course, gives him sufficient latitude in discovering many late additions in all books.

The work, though, has some positive value, which is especially evident in the discussion of the prophetic and Hagiographical books. In the introductions to these books, overlooking the extreme critical views of composition and date, a fine analysis of the content and a presentation of the ideas of the prophets as well as of the feelings of the poets is given, and much light is thrown on their nature and character. The aesthetic quality of the poetical books is fully emphasized and explained. There are also a number of valuable essays in the third and fourth volumes, notable among which are those on the language and style of the Bible which includes a discussion on the forms of Biblical poetry and rhythm, on the translations, on the Massoretic text, on parables, figures of speech, and kindred subjects.

Judging the work as a whole, we can say that it is regrettable that the extreme radical views expressed in the greater part of its volumes, negates to a very large degree its usefulness and value, and it is the more grievous that it is the only comprehensive introduction to the Bible written in Hebrew and by a Jewish scholar in any language.

92. *STUDIES IN THE ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE*

During the period under discussion, a number of Jewish scholars turned their attention to the problem of the relation of the accepted text of the Hebrew Bible, or the Massoretic, to those of the other ancient

versions, such as the Samaritan Hebrew text, the Septuagint translation and the *Peshitta*, or the Syriac. As it is well known, there are a large number of differences in the readings of verses between the Massoretic text and the versions. In case of the Samaritan, the differences are in the Hebrew text proper; in case of the translations, the differences are deduced, namely, that from the way the verse is translated, it can be inferred that the translators, whether those of the Septuagint or of the *Peshitta* had a different Hebrew text before them. The question then arose, which of the texts is the more authentic? Shall we believe the Massoretic which was regarded for generations with reverence, or shall we trust the readings of the versions, since their text preceded in time, for the earliest manuscript of the Massoretic text dates only back to the tenth century. Many scholars, especially non-Jewish, decided in favor of the versions, and were followed also by some Jewish savants. We have noted above the view of Harold Wiener who, utilizing the numerous changes in the text of the Biblical books found in the versions, defended the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch on the basis of such changes. A number of scholars, Jews and non-Jews, though, championed the authenticity of the Massoretic text. Zachariah Frankel (Vol. III, Sec. 76) devoted much effort to prove the untenability of the readings of the Septuagint translation and vindicated the superiority of the accepted Hebrew text.

i. However, Frankel's work was only a beginning, for it was limited both in scope and in content. He touched only on the Septuagint, and that only in a partial way. This work was taken up by others who enlarged the field of investigation and deepened the study in a systematic manner. The leader in this field of Biblical study is Hayyim Heller who, in a series of works written in German and Hebrew, undertook to prove the authenticity and superiority of the Massoretic text and that all changes in the reading of verses found either in the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch, or in the ancient translations, or even in the various manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible which were collected by Kennicott, arose not because there were really differences in the original Hebrew text, but for other reasons. They arose either as conscious changes by translators for purposes of explanation and clarification, and for the same reason also in the Hebrew Samaritan Bible whose writers were not as true to the text as the Massorites, or as in the case of the Hebrew manuscripts of the Massoretic text, through negligence of copyists or through glosses added by them. This general thesis he

proved with numerous citations and great skill in his works: *The Samaritan Pentateuch, An Adaptation of the Massoretic Text; Peshitta*, an edition of the Syriac translation transliterated into the usual Hebrew script with notes and an introduction discussing the differences in the readings—thus far the Books of Genesis and Exodus have appeared—and *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta*.

In the first work, Heller attempts to prove as the very title indicates, that the Samaritans did not have a different text of the Pentateuch than that of the Massoretic, but that the numerous discrepancies are due primarily to the fact that they took the liberty of inserting their interpretations in the Bible itself, a method which was repugnant to the Jews who scrupulously guarded every verse of the Bible in its pristine reading, not daring to change an iota. His principal proofs are as follows: Many deviations of the Samaritan text agree with the explanations of Mediaeval Jewish exegetes of those verses. The scholars had never seen a Samaritan Pentateuch and probably had never heard of its existence, and yet they remark that certain words or phrases in the verses are to be understood as if they were written either with the addition of a prefix or omission of a suffix in the case of words, or with the addition of a word or its omission in the case of phrases, or in any other way which clarifies the meaning of the phrase. These supposed changes are actually found in the Samaritan text which proves that they were introduced in the text merely for clarification. Another more striking proof is the fact that the Gaon, Saadia (Vol. I, Sec. 106), in his translation of the Pentateuch into Arabic agrees in a very large number of cases with the readings found in the Samaritan text. Saadia undoubtedly translated only the Massoretic text, but the deviations are, as he says himself in the preface, for purposes of clarification. He states explicitly that if he can make the meaning of a verse clearer by the addition of a word or a letter he will not hesitate to do so. It follows, therefore, that these additions and at times even omissions—for Saadia omits an unnecessary duplicate—found in the Samaritan Pentateuch were inserted or left out entirely for purposes of interpretation, and did not form part of the original text. These agreements of readings of the Samaritan text, with the explanations of the Mediaeval exegetes and with Saadia's translations are given in hundreds of citations and in a systematic and classified manner which prove the author's assumption in its various phases.

However, in order to obviate any possible, though far from probable

argument, that Saadia's translation was revised by a later hand in accordance with the Samaritan text, Heller devotes several chapters in which he cites numerous instances in which Saadia's translation agrees with the readings in the Septuagint and the *Peshitta* deviating from the Massoretic text all of which goes to prove that these deviations were introduced by the Samaritans as well as by the translators of the Bible into Greek and Syriac, for the very same reason as by Saadia namely for the purpose of interpretation. The author thus lays in this work the foundation of the theories which were further elaborated in the works devoted to the *Peshitta* and Septuagint respectively.

A few more chapters are devoted to arguments aiming to prove that many deviations in the Samaritan text are due to different grammatical usages of Hebrew adopted by the Samaritans, or to the mode of writing words, or to agreement with Halakic or Agadic interpretations of passages. These interpretations are found in Talmudic and Midrashic literature, but with the Jews they were given orally, while the Samaritans changed the text to conform to the interpretation, for they denied any Oral Law. The work displays great erudition and exceptional knowledge of the larger part of the extensive Jewish literature.

In the *Peshitta*, the author not only transcribed the Syriac translation into Hebrew characters in order to make that version accessible to the large number of Jewish scholars and also added valuable notes, but prefaced it by an introduction wherein he lays down a number of principles which explain the deviations of that version from the Massoretic text. Besides the addition or omission of words and phrases on the part of the translators for purposes of clarification, as was proved in the earlier work, there arose numerous differences due to errors of copyists. He even attempts to classify the errors or wilful changes according to motives or causes. Thus, certain changes occur because the copyist exchanged a word in one verse for another found in a nearby verse of similar content, either through error or desire to make both verses uniform. In the latter case, he might even have added a word or omitted one for the sake of uniformity. Again, such changes may arise because of the desire of the copyist to introduce uniformity of expression in verses similar in content or in form, though found in different chapters or books of the Pentateuch. Heller also endeavors to explain phenomena of variation or duplication of words in Hebrew manuscripts of the Bible by ascribing similar motives to the copyists. Thus, we find that two manuscripts both differ in their reading of cer-

tain verses from that of the Massoretic text, but that these differences vary. He explains it by the fact that there are two other verses analogous in form or content to the verse in question, and that one copyist followed the reading of one analogous verse, while the other followed the reading of the other verse. It also happened that one copyist exchanged a word in one verse for that of another, and another copyist copied the reading of the Massoretic text faithfully but also added the other word, and thus duplication resulted. The conclusion is that neither the various readings in the Hebrew manuscripts, nor the changes in the ancient translations represent original different readings in the early text of the Bible from those contained in the Massoretic text as many scholars maintain, but they are due to the causes stated above. As in the previous work, Heller proves his theories by hundreds of citations, both from manuscripts and the *Peshitta* as well as from the Septuagint.

In his third work *Untersuchungen zur Septuaginta*, Heller applies the principles, laid down in the earlier works, which prove his thesis that the variations in manuscripts, in the Samaritan text, and in the translations do not represent the original Hebrew text of the Bible, to the problem of the changes in this most ancient translation. He rejects the suggestion made by the German Biblical scholar, Franz Wutz, who attempted to explain the numerous variances in the readings of Biblical verses found in the Septuagint on the basis that the translators used a Hebrew text written in Greek characters, and that it was this transcription which often misled the translators. Heller shows this theory untenable and proves by numerous examples that the variants are primarily due to motives and causes, stated above, in regard to the Samaritan text, the *Peshitta*, and the Hebrew manuscript, while a number of changes were made for literary reasons. Such were the omission of words considered by the translators as duplicates or superfluous in conveying the content of the verse, or the rendering of words not in their primary but in their secondary figurative meaning. The author cites examples from *Targumim* and other old translations to prove his contention. The variants, due to the analogies noted previously, are systematically classified and their origin explained. A number of chapters are devoted to the explanation of readings which apparently seem to differ with those of the Massoretic text, but in reality do not. The writer explains that the renderings of the Septuagint are often due to the fact that the translators discerned another meaning in the Hebrew

words than the one usually given them, for many Hebrew words have more than one connotation. He cites parallels from the works of the Mediaeval Hebrew grammarians and exegetes.

The great value of Heller's studies in the field of the relation of the Massoretic text to versions and translations is his comprehensive mastery of the Talmudic and the Mediaeval philological and exegetical literature written both in Hebrew and Arabic which he utilizes with skill. His works, notwithstanding a number of far-fetched explanations of variants, are an important contribution to Jewish scholarship and Biblical study. They establish to a very large degree the authenticity and the superiority of the Massoretic text over all other ancient versions and translations.

ii. Of the other works dealing with the question of the authenticity of the Massoretic texts there are to be noted the *Massoret Seyog le-Mikrah* (The Massorah a Fence of the Bible) by David Kahana (1838) and *Das Schriftwort in der rabbinischen Literatur* by Victor Aptowitzer. The first, written from an orthodox point of view, defends the Massoretic text from all attacks with great vigor and also endeavors to refute the documentary theory of the critics as well as the assignment of later dates for the different books of the Pentateuch. A large part of the work is devoted to the explanation of certain Massoretic devices, especially the pauses placed by the Massorites in the midst of passages and verses. There are twenty-eight such pauses in the entire Bible and they are often puzzling, inasmuch as they seem to interrupt the content of the verses. These pauses were from olden times a subject of discussion by scholars who endeavored to supply the reason for them. Some of these were already explained in the Talmud. In modern times it was suggested that the pauses or signs of division indicate faulty text, namely the Massorites themselves could not read or understand certain words, and they therefore deleted them and in their place substituted the sign of the pause. Kahana rejects such suggestion and proposes his own. He admits deletion, not of faulty words, but of passages which were omitted because of their harshness towards certain Biblical personages. The Bible, with its spirit of truth, did not spare the honor of the greatest men and consequently their shortcomings were pointed out. The Massorites, however, who lived in later times, did not want to see the great men of the past dishonored, and they, therefore, deleted such passages, and to indicate such omission, they placed the sign of the pause. It is, of course, understood that the deleted passages did not

contain anything essential to the narrative. Kahana attempts to reconstruct the omissions and displays great skill in his proposed restoration. On the whole, though, there is much keenness of mind displayed in this work but little critical acumen and scientific soundness.

Aptowitzer's work is of a different order and of a higher scientific quality. His point of view is critical but of a conservative nature. It deals, as its title indicates, with the variants of readings of numerous verses found in quotations in Talmudic, Midrashic, and in post-Talmudic literature. In fact, it covers the field of literature up to the end of the fifteenth century when printed Bibles became widespread. It was noted for a long time that quotations of verses in various parts of the Talmudic and Midrashic books differed often with the readings of the Massoretic text. Various interpretations were placed upon this phenomenon; some scholars endeavored to reconcile the discrepancies by different devices, while others concluded that the authority of the Massoretic text is much impaired by these deviations. Aptowitzer undertook therefore to investigate the extent and scope of such deviations on a larger scale than it had hitherto been done. For this purpose he included the writings of the most important scholars from the close of the Talmud to the end of the fifteenth century.

He is very cautious in his selection of variants for he is well aware that numerous deviations are not due to different readings in the verses but to other causes, such as quotation from memory, scribal errors, and mainly to the fact that the quotations are often consciously abbreviated or altered, as the purpose was to give the content of the verse rather than the exact wording. He therefore applies strict critical tests to each deviation, and, on the whole, divides them into five classes as follows: (a) Certain deviations namely, such which seem evident from the content of the passage in which the quotation is found, and these constitute a comparatively small number; (b) highly probable, since the changes are supported by readings in ancient versions; (c) probable, namely those corroborated by similar readings in manuscripts of the Hebrew Bibles; (d) most possible, such quotations found in all sources; and (e) possible, those found only in a large number of sources. He then proceeds to arrange all deviations in systematic order according to chapters and verses in the Books of I Samuel, Joshua, II Samuel, and Judges. The rather unsystematic order of the books is due to the fact that the study was undertaken in the course of a number of years, and each book was investigated separately. The majority of the deviations collected by

Aptowitzer, however, do not represent essential differences in the readings, and are limited to changes in a prefix, omission of a prefix or word, but a considerable number of changes are of a more important nature. The author does not undertake to decide which of the readings are more authentic, whether those of the quotations or those of the Massoretic text. He is, as he states in the preface, more interested in the history of the Biblical text than in its criticism. As such his work is a veritable contribution to the subject and the results can be applied to the clarification of many problems in Biblical studies.

iii. Besides the work of Aptowitzer, there were numerous studies made on the same subject by a number of scholars and published in various periodicals or brochures. Of these the most important in quantity is the *Mishpahat Soferim* (The Family of Scribes) by S. Rosenfeld. He collected over eleven hundred variants to readings of verses in the entire Bible. The work, though, is not distinguished by critical acumen, and its quality is further impaired by the tendency of the author to prove that the changes found in Talmudic quotations are superior to those of the Massoretic text. As a result many of his variants turn out, upon examination, incorrect citations or do not indicate real changes in the text as they are conscious abbreviations of the verses, or misquotations.

93. APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

The field of the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, which was hitherto almost exclusively the province of non-Jewish scholars, was entered during the period by Jewish savants who enriched it with their contributions and enlarged its scope. The cause for this sudden interest was the discovery in the late nineties by Solomon Schechter (Sec. 155) and others of a large portion of the Hebrew original of the *Wisdom of Ben Sira*. The bringing to light of the Hebrew original of this most interesting of the Apocryphal books which was lost for close to a thousand years—the last scholar who mentioned the Hebrew Ben Sira was Saadia—reads like a romance. In 1896, two Englishwomen, Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson, returned from their travels in Palestine and Sinai bringing with them many fragments of ancient manuscripts. Among these fragments, Schechter, who was then reader of Talmud in Cambridge, found a Hebrew leaf which he identified as part of the *Wisdom of Ben Sira*. This leaf contained the portion from XXXIX, 15-XL, 8. The find, which was published by the discoveror in the *Ex-*

positor in July of that year, created a stir in the scholarly world, and a search was made for more fragments, and by a remarkable coincidence, nine more leaves were found by Cowley and Adolph Neubauer (Vol. III, Sec. 89) in a collection of manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, which contained the portion from XL, 9 to XLIX, 11. It was evident that the leaf discovered by Schechter and the nine by Neubauer formed a consecutive part of one manuscript. Schechter then went to Cairo, and by arrangement with the heads of the ancient synagogue, transported a large part of the discarded books and manuscripts, which were kept in a special room, known as *Genizah* (Storing Place), to Cambridge. Among the manuscripts he found another large portion of Ben Sira containing Chas. XXX-XXXVIII, with passages missing, and also a fragment containing Ch. L to the end of the book, Ch. LI, 30. The missing portions in Chas. XXX-XXXVIII were later supplied by fragments found by Elkan Adler. There was then an almost continuous text with slight deficiencies from the middle of Ch. XXX to the end. Subsequently Schechter found among the boxes of the *Genizah* portions of the earlier chapters, such as III-VII; XI-XVI from another Hebrew manuscript of Ben Sira and these were again completed by Elkan Adler. Still later, small isolated fragments were found by Schechter, Gaster, and Israel Levi. The final discovery was a few fragments found in 1931 by Joseph Marcus among a collection of Mss. in the Jewish Theological Seminary of New York. The result of all these discoveries is that out of the 1616 couplets contained in the Greek version of Ben Sira we now have 1090, about two thirds, in the original Hebrew.

i. The discovery of all these Hebrew portions set in motion a feverish activity on the part of Jewish scholars for editing and commenting the parts found. Neubauer together with Cowley were the first to publish an edition of the first ten leaves found in the year 1897. In this edition, readings are corrected and selected, for the manuscripts contain glosses and marginal notes, and the wording of verses had to be determined. Besides, the meanings are elucidated and explained. This was followed by a volume entitled *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*, published in 1899 by Schechter and Taylor, in which the first edited the Hebrew text of the portions discovered by him with exegetic notes and a lengthy introduction, while Taylor supplied the English translation and explanatory notes. In his notes, Schechter displays great skill in selecting the proper readings of dubious passages and elucidates the meaning of

difficult verses. In the introduction he discusses the place of the *Wisdom of Ben Sira* in Jewish literature, the attitude of the Rabbis toward the book, and devotes special attention to the Hebrew style, showing by a long list of words and phrases its close relation to that of the Bible, and that the author frequently paraphrased Biblical verses. A very excellent edition of the Hebrew text together with a translation in French of the commentary, notes, and introduction was produced by Israel Levi in his work, *L'Ecclésiastique*, in two parts published in 1899 and 1901 respectively. In this work he discusses not only the Hebrew portions, but the book as a whole from all angles and draws extensive comparisons of the Hebrew original with the Greek and Syriac versions.

The Hebrew text continued to hold the interest of Jewish scholars, and even in 1912 there appeared a complete Hebrew version of the *Book of Ben Sira* with introduction and commentary in the same language by David Kahana. In the version, portions of the recovered Hebrew text are incorporated and the omissions are supplied by a new translation from the Greek by Dr. S. Kaminezki. The introduction is rather brief and a large part of it is devoted to the vindication of the superiority of the Hebrew text over that of the Greek and Syriac versions, and in general the work lacks scientific precision. Its value lies in the edition of the Hebrew text and mainly in the commentary. Kahana believes in the authenticity of the text itself and attempts to vindicate its correctness against the glosses and marginal readings found on the manuscript as well as against readings suggested by the other versions. He displays insight into the spirit of the Hebrew language, and many of his readings and emendations are preferable to those of other scholars who followed the glosses or corrected the Hebrew in accordance with the Greek or Syriac. Frequently, though, his readings and comments are far-fetched and are of a homiletic character. Another complete Hebrew version with commentary and notes entitled *Sefer Hokmat Ben Sira ha-Shalem* (The Complete Book of the Wisdom of Ben Sira) was published by M. Z. Segal in 1933. This edition excels that of Kahana by its scientific approach and by attention to the results of the many scholarly studies in the field which were made during the period.

The discovery of the Hebrew text and its various editions and commentaries not only contributed greatly towards the understanding,

clarification, and elucidation of the content of this important Apocryphal work, but has also a bearing upon phases of Hebrew diction and style. The text supplied us with a number of words hitherto unknown and especially with new usages and nuances of old Hebrew words and phrases, and in general, it represents a transitional stage in the language from the Biblical to the Mishnaic form. It is also to be noted that the Hebrew text gives the name of the author as Simeon, the son of Joshua, the son of Eleazar ben Sira, against the Greek text which calls him Joshua the son of Eleazar the son of Sira. This name, found in three Hebrew Mss. three times (L. 27 and twice at the end) is not found in any of the other versions. Jewish scholars agree to its authenticity. Other scholars cling to the name Joshua which was accepted through the centuries and consider the name Simeon found in the Hebrew text a gloss.

ii. Ben Sira, though, did not occupy the entire attention of Jewish scholars. Other books also drew their interest. *The Book of Tobit* was especially favored. Rosenthal published in 1885 a work entitled *Vier apocryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akibas*, in which he attempts to assign to Tobit and three other Apocryphal books a late date, the middle of the second century C.E. M. Rosenmann, however, in his *Studien zur Buche Tobit* comes, on the basis of analysis of marriage customs and laws as well as Agadic elements contained therein, to the conclusion that it cannot be later than the middle of the second century B.C.E. Adolph Neubauer published a newly discovered Aramaic version of the *Book of Tobit* with an English translation and M. Gaster published two unknown Hebrew versions one of which he considers to be the very original written prior to the Greek translations.

The *Book of Judith* was also dealt with by several Jewish scholars in a number of essays, among them, *Sefer Yehudit* and *Heorot 'Al Mazab ha-Ishah be-Sefer Yehudit* (Notes on the Position of Women as Reflected in the book of Judith) by H. P. Chajes in the Jubilee volumes of Harkavy and Blau respectively. In the last essay Chajes comes to the conclusion, on the basis of analysis of the contents, especially the geographic description of the land, that the Book of Judith consists of two parts, a historical kernel and embellishments by a later author who wrote a romantic story on the basis of the historical event, in which he aimed to glorify the importance of Jerusalem and its leaders,

as well as the sanctity of the Temple showing the reverence displayed by the Jews of the province of Samaria for the Judean capitol and its sanctuary.

iii. The Apocalyptic books, Jubilees and IV Ezra, were dealt with by Büchler and Kaminka. The first endeavors in his essay, *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, to prove that the book was originally written in Greek and in Egypt. He marshals arguments for his thesis but is not convincing. The second published a Hebrew translation of IV Ezra with introduction and notes entitled, *Sefer Hezyonot Assir Shaltiel*, in which he ascribes the body of the IV Ezra to Shaltiel, son of Jechoniah, and antedates it about five centuries. He claims it was composed in 556 B.C.E. It is a novel theory but untenable.³ Gaster published Hebrew versions of the *Testament of Naphtali* and parts of *Enoch*. All his versions of Apocryphal and Apocalyptic books were included by him later in his volumes of *Texts and Studies*.

iv. An important undertaking in the field of Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature was carried out by A. Kahana who published in the years 1932-1938 a complete translation into Hebrew of all Apocryphal, Apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic books with introductions and commentaries. The edition was prepared by him with the coöperation of a number of scholars, and it is undoubtedly a contribution to modern Hebrew literature. However, as the publication of the works falls beyond the limit of time set by us, a more detailed survey of the edition cannot be given here.

94. LEXICOGRAPHY AND SCIENCE OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE

Jewish scholars during the period did not neglect the field of lexicography and the scientific study of the Hebrew language and tilled its soil with great assiduity producing a number of very important works. An impetus for this type of study was given by the national movement and the consequent revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. The followers of this movement found it necessary for the purpose to explore the treasures of Hebrew literature in order to find words and nuances for conveying the concepts and expressions of modern life as well as to coin new terms for the numerous articles and scientific nomenclature employed in present day life and letters.

³ For criticism of the views of Büchler and Kaminka see Vol. I, 2nd edition, pp. 477-482.

Again, the intensifying of interest in Jewish education and the attempts to improve its methods, which resulted in the writing of numerous textbooks and grammars, the concentration, in Palestine, of a large number of writers and scholars, the opening of the Hebrew University, and the organization of an academy of savants and writers for the scientific study of the language—all these brought about an extensive activity in this branch of Jewish knowledge.

i. A lexicographical work of high caliber and imposing both by its quality and quantity is the *Hekal ha-Kodesh* (The Holy Temple), a complete and all-embracing Biblical concordance by the Hebrew poet, Solomon Mandelkern (Vol. III, Sec. 40). This concordance, published in 1906 in two large folio volumes, excels all preceding ones in numerous ways. The first Hebrew concordance by Isaac Nathan (Vol. II, Sec. 7), written in 1437, dealt primarily with verbs and included only a few of the nouns, leaving out entirely all particles, adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, proper names, and Aramaic words of the Bible. The one published by the Buxtorfs in 1632 introduced the Aramaic words but did not include all the others mentioned. Fürst, in his concordance published in 1840, introduced further improvements, including some particles, adverbs, and prepositions, and likewise included the Aramaic words, but in poor order. Mandelkern made his concordance as complete as possible. He included all verbs, adverbs, nouns, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, and proper names. The last two he grouped in long lists at the end of the second volume and he likewise assigned a special section for the Aramaic words and introduced many other improvements. He quotes the verses according to the order of the Canon as given in the Hebrew Bible and not as in the Vulgate, which was followed in all concordances. The quotations of the verses are given in full and not in abbreviated form as in earlier concordances. Most valuable, though, is his method of treatment of the articles. Each article or word is preceded by a lengthy note in which the meaning of the verb or noun is given in all its nuances according to the leading Jewish commentators, and when necessary, the explanations of modern exegetes are given. The words in the quotations are given according to the Massoretic text, but all changes, such as the differences between the written form and the traditional reading (Ketib and Keri), or the readings of the *Targum*, the Septuagint and other versions, or even the emendations of modern scholars are noted. In case of nouns not directly derived from verbs

he suggests a possible derivation; quite frequently he offers an explanation of a difficult verse. As an example of his completeness, we will cite the treatment of the particle *Et* which denotes in Hebrew the objective case. After a lengthy note in which the nuances of the particle are stated, and all deviations from Massoretic readings by versions or emendations which substitute another word for *Et* are enumerated, he gives a long alphabetical list of all verbs which take that particle—for a list of quotations would occupy a volume. *Et* has also other meanings, as near, among, with, and is also used with prefixes, and for this purpose a supplementary list of verbs which employ that particle in these connotations is added.

These qualities together with correctness of quotations, excellence of arrangement, and keenness of the linguistic notes, make the *Hekal ha-Kodesh* a veritable contribution to Hebrew lexicography, grammar, and syntax, as well as to Biblical exegesis.

ii. A stupendous undertaking in the field of Hebrew lexicography which is of exceptional importance is the *Milon ha-Lashon ha-Ibrit ha-Yeshanah we-ha-Hadashah* (A Complete Dictionary of Ancient and Modern Hebrew) by Eliezer ben Yehudah (Sec. 40). This scholar, who as we have seen above, was greatly instrumental in reviving Hebrew as a spoken language, equipped himself during a great part of his life for this work. The distinguishing quality of the work is the total completeness, for it practically embraces all words that the Hebrew language, in its widest connotation, ever possessed or could possess. It embraces all Biblical words including the Aramaic; all words in the wide and extensive Jewish literature, whether Talmudic, Midrashic, poetic, or philosophic; and finally, a large number of words coined in recent times whether by the author himself or by others. Completeness, however, is not the only quality of the work. Of equal importance is the imposing number of quotations from literature, cited for every one of the nuances, and shades of usage and meaning of each word. The quotations are drawn, as said, from the entire Jewish literature beginning with the Bible. As a result, an article frequently occupies several folio pages. The author also employs the conceptual method, that is if the word happens to denote not only the mere name of an object or term for an action but connotes a wider concept, all other words which are conceptually related to the main word are then grouped under it, though they are later given separate articles. The dictionary has also numerous notes of philologi-

cal, lexicographical, exegetical and literary content, in which questions of punctuation, readings, Massoretic problems, derivations of words are discussed, and explanations of passages given. The work is thus of great value not only to students of Hebrew philology and lexicography, but also to all who are interested in kindred branches of Jewish knowledge. The dictionary was supposed to contain ten volumes, but thus far only eight have appeared, and the last two are still in manuscript, and even that in incomplete form, for the author died before he succeeded in organizing the entire work and preparing it for the press.

iii. The establishment of a large Jewish center in Palestine where Hebrew is spoken, and especially the opening of the University, necessitated the production of several technical dictionaries in the field of medicine. The first, the *Milon Refui Ibri* (A Hebrew Medical Dictionary) by A. Malchi, published in 1928, is a practical dictionary and contains a large number of terms arranged according to the Latin alphabet. It gives the Hebrew terms for the Latin words used in medicine. The work is based primarily on the studies of others, and contains only few new terms by the author. The second is the *Sefer ha-Munahim le-Refuah u-le-Mad'a ha-Teba* (The Book of Terms for Medicine and Natural Sciences) by A. M. Masie (1858-1930). Masie, who was a Talmudic scholar, an expert physician, and a keen linguist, versed in a number of Semitic languages, was well equipped for this task which occupied the greater part of his life. For over forty years he collected material for this work but did not live to see it published. The material and partially finished manuscript were edited by Saul Tschernichowski (Sec. 29), famous poet and physician, and appeared in 1934. It is stupendous in quantity and distinguished in quality. It contains together with derivatives about 60,000 terms, for as the title states there are included words for allied sciences, such as physics, chemistry, zoology and biology as far as such terms are applied in medicine in all its branches and phases. It is arranged according to the Latin alphabet, for the Hebrew words are the equivalents of the Latin terms. The use of Latin, however, is limited to the technical terms. The more popular terms are given in the English form. The scientific quality is high, for the author searched the entire Talmudic and Mediaeval medical literature and all other works for Hebrew equivalents of the terms. He also coined numerous new terms, carefully weighing each word. The editor added many notes and sug-

gested a number of terms of his own. Very frequently several equivalents are given for a Mediaeval term and the preferred one is indicated by larger type. The work is a reliable guide to all who write on the various phases of medicine and allied sciences in Hebrew.

Numerous studies in medical terminology were published in the volumes of the *Leshonénu* (Our Language) by philologically-minded physicians. The important of these are by S. Tschernichowski and A. J. Levy. The latter's essays in that quarterly and in other learned publications on the terminology of anatomy are distinguished by keen linguistic insight and by thoroughness of research. Their value is enhanced by the author's mastery of the Semitic languages.

Vocabularies for various sciences and industries containing collections of terms for botany, printing, telephone, telegraph, electrical appliances, for gymnastics, and for general technology, were published in Palestine during the last decade of this century by the *Va'ad ha-Lashon* (Committee on the Expansion of the Hebrew Language) composed of scholars of note. Numerous lexicographical studies were also published in the volumes of the quarterly *Leshonénu* by many Jewish scholars, the important of which are those of its editor, the eminent Semitic philologist, N. H. Torczyner.

iv. A work of great importance in the field of Talmudic lexicography is Samuel Krauss' (1866) *Griechische und Lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud und Midrasch* (Greek and Latin Loan Words in Talmud and Midrash), published in 1898. The work consists of two volumes, the second of which contains a dictionary of over three thousand words of Greek and Latin origin used in Talmudic and Midrashic literature, while the preceding volume is a treatise on the grammar, changes and transformation of these words. These words of foreign origin were not taken over by the Talmudists and Agadists in their original form, but passed through many changes introduced by the people who used them and were further distorted by the influence of the Hebrew-Aramaic dialect spoken by the Jews at the time. Besides, they were also transliterated into the Hebrew script. In addition, the texts where they are found have not come down to us in pure form but are often corrupted. All these things made the task of reconstructing the Greek and Latin origin of these words more difficult. The first volume, which deals with the general grammar of these words is, therefore, of great value. The author begins with a discussion of the transcription of these words in Hebrew characters and follows it by an attempt

to lay down rules for the various changes which the words underwent, such as the substitution of consonants for vowels or vice versa, or addition of Hebrew prefixes or suffixes. He then traces the changes in gender and number the words assumed. The Hebrew has no neuter and consequently the words are classed either as masculine or as feminine. The plural, as a rule, assumed either the Hebrew or the Aramaic form, very seldom retaining its original form. In his discussion of the verb, he points out that only the verbal stem was borrowed, but the forms of conjugations are either Hebrew or Aramaic. In other words, these borrowed stems were treated as if they were a part of the Hebrew or Aramaic language. He concludes by discussing the change of meaning which these words assumed in their new environment. They were endowed with various nuances and different connotations. The dictionary itself not only gives the meaning and derivation of the words, but cites also illustrations, and the articles often contain philological discussions. The nature of the work involves the assumption of many suppositions which cannot always be proved with certainty. The work also contains a number of notes by Immanuel Löw (Vol. III, Sec. 83), the great Talmudic philologist, which correct many of these suppositions. Löw also added a classified index of the Greek and Latin words found in that literature. They are divided into groups, such as geographic terms; names of minerals, animals, bodily organs, garments, and military offices; and political, scientific, architectural, and legal terms, and many others. This enhances the scholarly value of the book.

v. The field of Hebrew grammar was assiduously cultivated by Jewish scholars during the period, and many treatises dealing with the entire subject or with certain phases of it were written both in Hebrew and in several European languages. Especially numerous are the grammatical surveys written in Hebrew and intended as text books. Most of them, however, add little to grammatical knowledge, and are primarily compilations of rules of grammar culled from standard treatises on Hebrew grammar. To the more important works in this branch of Jewish knowledge belong the works of Jacob Barth, Lambert, and M. B. Schneider. The first wrote the *Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen*, and *Wurzel-Untersuchungen zur hebräischen und aramäischen*, dealing respectively with the formation of nouns in the Semitic languages in general, and in Hebrew in particular, and with studies of the stems of verbs in Hebrew and Aramaic. The second

published, in 1931, his *Traité de grammaire hébraïque* (A Treatise on Hebrew Grammar) where the subject is treated in a highly scientific manner and according to the latest researches in the field. The work of the third, *Torat ha-Lashon be-Hitpaḥuto* (The Theory of the Hebrew Language in the Light of its Historical Development) is a comprehensive historical Hebrew grammar according to its successive phases. It also deals with the various changes the language underwent in the course of history.

vi. The revival of Hebrew and the intense interest taken in the language by scholars on that account stimulated study also in the field of Mishnaic and Talmudic grammar. As a result, a number of important books and valuable essays in this field were written during the period. The most comprehensive treatise on the subject is the *Dikḏuk Leshon ha-Mishnah* (A Grammar on the Language of the Mishnah) by Moses Zebi Segal (1877). Segal devoted many years to the study of Hebrew philology, especially to the Mishnaic phase and published at first in learned journals a number of essays on the relation of the Mishnaic to Biblical Hebrew, and later in 1927 a grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew in English; and still later, he issued the above work which is a revised and improved edition of the English work.

The grammar is prefaced by an historical introduction which discusses the stages of development of the Hebrew language, the origin of Mishnaic Hebrew, its nature and relation to Biblical Hebrew and to Aramaic, its gradual development and its various dialects. The author emphasizes its closeness to Biblical Hebrew and rejects the view expressed by earlier scholars that Mishnaic Hebrew, often called by them the neo-Hebrew, is an artificial creation of literati and scholars. He asserts that Mishnaic Hebrew represents the language spoken by the people during a large part of the period of the Second Commonwealth, and that its differences from the Biblical are due partly to that very fact, and partly to various causes which bring about changes in a living language in the course of time. The language of the Bible, says Segal, is primarily one of poetry and elegant prose. As such it is limited in its scope of words. The language of ordinary life and the market-place is, as a rule, more varied and ramified. Again, poetic and elegant style requires the use of specific words, while that of the people may dispense with them. It is because of this that we find numerous words and usages of the Bible missing in Mishnaic Hebrew, and vice versa a large number of words and phrases employed in the Mishnah are not found

in the Bible. It does not follow, then, that these words were invented or coined, but we may rightly assume that they were also current in Hebrew, but the content of the Bible did not require their use. In addition, the spoken language of the people is bound to change in time, for conceptions increase, new ways and manners of life are discovered, and these need expression. Besides, a popular language tends, as a rule, to lighten the burden of the strict grammatical rules, and chooses easier and simpler modes of speech. As a result of all these factors, the differences between Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew ensued. The author also minimizes the extent of influence of Aramaic upon Mishnaic Hebrew and points out that of the three hundred verbs found in the Mishnah and not in the Bible, only thirty can be traced to direct borrowing from the Aramaic. The author, therefore, believes that he is justified in asserting that Mishnaic Hebrew embodies the popular speech of the Jewish masses in Palestine during the greater part of the Second Commonwealth, and thus represents a phase in the long development of that language.

The grammar itself embraces the theory of phonetics and syllabication, a complete etymology, and an extended theory of syntax. It is thus not only a contribution to Hebrew and Talmudic philology, but also conduces to a better understanding of the content of the Mishnah. Other works in the field are K. Albrecht's *Neuhebräische Grammatik auf Grund der Mischna* (A Grammar of neo-Hebrew on the Basis of the Mishnah); H. Sachs' *Die Partikelen der Mischna*; and H. Rosenberg's *Das Geschlecht der Hauptwörter in der Mischna* (The Gender of Nouns in the Mishnah).

vii. There are also a number of monographs and essays on the lives and works of leading Medieval grammarians, and likewise several new editions of standard philological works. The important of these are S. A. Poznanski's *Mosé ben Samuel Ha-Kohen Ibn Chiquitilla*, a treatise on the contribution of Moses Ibn Gikatilia (Vol. I, Sec. 102), the eleventh century grammarian and exegete, to both Hebrew philology and Biblical exegesis, and J. S. Fuchs' Monograph, *Judah Ibn Balaam* (Vol. I, Ibid.), Gikatilia's contemporary, and one of the leading philologists and exegetes of that century.

Of the editions of standard grammatical works, the most valuable and distinguished by its thoroughness is Michael Wilenski's edition of Jonah Ibn Jannah's *Sefer ha-Rikmah* (Vol. I, Sec. 101). This famous grammatical work of the eleventh century, written originally in

Arabic and twice translated into Hebrew, once by Moses Gikatilia and a second time by Judah Ibn Tibbon, was first published from manuscript by Baer Goldberg in 1856. His edition, though, was unscientific and incorrect. Wilenski re-edited Ibn Tibbon's translation of the work according to four manuscripts, and added copious notes which form a running commentary. He also added detailed indices of the Biblical passages and Talmudic citations and quotations from earlier grammarians mentioned in the book. Wilenski thus made by his scientific edition of this leading work in the science of Hebrew language an important contribution to the history of Hebrew grammar and Biblical exegesis.

CHAPTER X

TALMUDICS, JEWISH LAW, AND RABBINICS

95. EDITIONS OF TALMUDIC AND MIDRASHIC TEXTS

Extensive and intensive activity was displayed by numerous Jewish scholars in many countries in the field of Talmudic literature, Jewish law, and post-Talmudic or Rabbinic literature in all phases and branches. The works dealing with Talmudics, including Midrashic literature can, on the whole, be divided into the following classes: (a) Works treating of improvements in the texts of tractates of the Talmud, both the Babylonian and Palestinian, as well as partial commentaries and editions of Halakic and Agadic Midrashim; (b) Concordances and Talmudic Encyclopaedias; (c) Treatises on the history of the *Halakah* and special phases of life and science as reflected in Talmudic and Midrashic literature; and (d) Monographs and Biographies.

i. To the first class belongs a series of sixteen volumes called *Dikduké Sofrim* or *Variae Lectiones* (Different Readings in the Text of the Babylonian Talmud), published by Raphael Nathan Rabinowitz during a period of twenty years, 1868-1888. The author took as his basis the famous Munich manuscript of the Talmud written in the year 1343 and noted all the readings throughout the Talmud which differ from those in the printed text. He also utilized two other manuscripts of the Talmud, one from the Munich library, and the other from the Bodleian in Oxford. Both of these manuscripts were written subsequently to the one of the fourteenth century. He arranged the readings of both the printed text and the manuscript in two parallel columns and added numerous notes. He also used a manuscript of Rashi's commentary and one of the *Tosafot* to a number of tractates. All these changes are included in the notes. The sixteen volumes cover twenty-four tractates of the Babylonian Talmud. As such, they contribute much to a better understanding of a large number of passages in the Talmud, in Rashi's commentary, and in the *Tosafot*, as

many difficulties are removed. The notes, besides citing parallels and references to earlier editions of the Talmud, often discuss the qualities of the changed readings and indicate which is to be preferred, whether the one of the printed text or of the manuscript. The first volume also contains an essay entitled *Ma'amar 'Al Hadfasat ha-Talmud* (An Essay on the Printing of the Talmud) which contains a history of the various editions of the Talmud, both complete and partial, and even of single tractates, during five centuries (1484-1877). The essay possesses not only bibliographical but also literary value.

ii. Of the editions of Halakic Midrashim, the leading one is Hayyim Saul Horovitz's edition of the *Sifré* on Numbers and Deuteronomy. The Tannaitic Midrash on Numbers, known as *Sifré* (Vol. I, Sec. 44), was previously edited by Friedman together with a commentary, but later investigations in the field of Halakic Midrashim made a new edition necessary, and that of Horovitz excels the earlier one in many respects. The text is that of the *editio princeps* of the book, but the editor also utilized several manuscripts of the *Sifré*, and readings found in the quotations from this Tannaitic Midrash in the *Yalkut* (Vol. I, Sec. 89), and in several works containing selections from Tannaitic Midrashim which are still in manuscript or commentaries on the *Sifré*. These various readings are given in notes. More valuable are his explanatory notes which clarify the difficult passages. They are mainly collected from commentaries of predecessors, but also contain numerous remarks of the editor himself which display keen understanding of the Midrash.

The book is prefaced by an introduction in German in which the editor develops his theory regarding the Tannaitic school from which the *Sifré* emanated. Based on a statement of Rabbi Johannan, a leading Palestinian *Amora* of the third century, scholars usually held the view that the *Sifré* on Numbers and Deuteronomy was generally arranged by the *Tanna*, R. Simon ben Yochai, a disciple of R. Akiba. Consequently, it was considered a product of R. Akiba's school. However, investigating the content of the Midrash they began to doubt the correctness of such view. Horovitz, after a close analysis, completely rejects it, and upon a number of proofs based on the method of interpretation of verses, as well as on the hermeneutic rules employed in it, he comes to the conclusion that the *Sifré* on Numbers as well as the first part of the Midrash on Deuteronomy (up to Ch. XII) belong to the

school of R. Ishmael, and continues the Midrashim of that school on the Pentateuch beginning with the *Mekilta*.

The *Sifré Zutta*, the shorter Midrash on Numbers published by Horovitz as an appendix to his edition of the *Sifré* is, in reality, a consecutive arrangement of quotations in other books and published for the first time. There is no complete text preserved of that Midrash, only copious excerpts in the *Yalkut*, in the Midrashic collection brought from Yemen known as *Midrash ha-Gadol* (Vol. I, 2nd ed. Addition, IX), and in the *Aruk* of R. Nathan of Rome (Ibid., Sec. 148), and other books. All these excerpts were pieced together by the editor into one continuous work and supplied with notes and commentary. To them he joined a fragment recovered from the *Genizah* which contains the interpretations of that Midrash on the last four chapters of the Book of Numbers (XXXII-XXXVI). The editor thus skilfully reconstructed a lost Halakic Midrash out of fragments and quoted excerpts. It is his view on the basis of certain features that the *Sifré Zutta* emanates from the school of Rabbi Akiba, though he cannot determine with certainty the *Tanna* who first arranged the original version.

iii. A less scientific edition of an important Halakic Midrash but one which excels others by its commentary is that of the *Sifra* on Leviticus by Rabbi Israel Cohen, the author of a popular treatise on practical ethics, entitled *Hafeẓ Hayyim*. Rabbi Israel, a Talmudic scholar of the old type, used no manuscripts nor was he acquainted with the methods of scientific editions, but was primarily guided by his intuition which he developed as the result of a life of study of Talmudics. The only glosses and corrections which he employed were those of the Gaon of Wilna, a complete copy of which he discovered in the library of a private book collector. He also utilized readings and corrections found in earlier commentaries and excerpts of that Midrash in works of older scholars. He accordingly prepared the text in the best way he was able. But, as said, the excellence of his edition consists in the commentary. It contains the best explanations of all earlier commentation and also numerous comments of his own. Furthermore, since his intention was to make the work accessible to the ordinary student, he is detailed and writes in simple style. His commentary thus clarifies the meaning of the content and contributes much to the understanding of this difficult Halakic Midrash.

iv. Attempts were also made during the period to edit certain tractates of the Palestinian Talmud, one of the neglected branches of Talmudic literature. The leading worker in this field was Baer Ratner who, in a series of volumes published during the years 1901-1911 and entitled euphuistically *Ahabat Zion we-Yerushalayyim* (The Love of Zion and Jerusalem), collected notes on the improved readings of the texts of the tractates of the first two orders of the Palestinian Talmud, *Zeraim* and *Moed*. These readings are culled from manuscripts and excerpts quoted in the numerous works of the scholars of generations. Ratner displays a critical attitude towards the glosses and readings which he compiled and selects the best and most probable. His work contains numerous explanations of many passages.

v. A work which both comments the content of three tractates, *Shabbat*, *Erubin*, and *Pesahim*, and also improves their text is the *Yerushalmi ke-Peshuto* (The Jerushalmi Plainly Interpreted) by a young Talmudic scholar from Palestine, Saul Liberman. This scholar devoted much energy in the last decade to the Palestinian Talmud and his last work in the field is valuable. It aims primarily to explain difficult passages in these tractates. The comments are based on readings in four manuscripts of that Talmud as well as on explanations of passages found in earlier partial commentaries and in extensive quotations in works of Mediaeval scholars. Much attention is also given to the correction of the texts of the passages. The comments are elucidating and often ingenious, but the title of the book is not justified, for it is not a continuous commentary, but only explanations of selected passages. The work is prefaced by an introduction dealing with some difficult features of the Palestinian Talmud and showing how these can be removed by applying scientific method to its study. Notes on the text of the Palestinian Talmud and comments on selected passages were also offered by I. N. Epstein of Jerusalem in a number of studies published in the *Tarbiz*, the Hebrew University Quarterly.

vi. Turning to Agadic Midrashim, there are to be noted the scientific critical editions of the *Pesikta Rabbati* (Vol. I, Sec. 84) and the *Seder Eliyahu Rabba we-Seder Eliyahu Zutta* by the expert editor, Meir Friedman (Vol. III, Sec. 83). The *Pesikta Rabbati*, unlike the *Pesikta di-Rabbi Kahana*, published first by Solomon Buber in 1868 from manuscripts, was printed several times during the last few centuries (the editio princeps being that of Prague, 1656), but all editions were uncritical and full of errors. Friedman therefore edited it anew,

improving the text by a considerable number of better readings found in the quotations of numerous passages of this Midrash in other Midrashim and in the extensive Rabbinic literature. He also added four sections from a newly discovered manuscript, and in addition, wrote a commentary which greatly elucidates the content of the *Pesikta*. The edition is preceded by an introduction which discusses the date of the book, its character, and nature. Regarding the date, Friedman differs with the opinion advanced by Zunz that the book was compiled in the year 805, which opinion is based on a statement in the book itself. He believes that it was compiled around the beginning of the seventh century c.e. and interprets the statement differently. The edition is also supplied with a register of all Biblical verses on which the homilies of the Midrash are based, and with a glossary of Greek and Latin works prepared by M. Güdemann. The edition of the Midrash, *Seder Eliyahu Rabba we-Seder Eliyahu Zutta*, excels that of the *Pesikta* in several respects. First, the editor really gave an improved text, for both the *editio princeps* of 1598 and the subsequent editions were full of errors and incorrect readings, while he, using a Vatican manuscript as his basis and comparing it with the printed editions, succeeded in producing a correct text. Second, the long introduction occupying about one hundred and fifty pages, a work in itself, is a contribution to the history of Agadic literature. This Midrash which bears the name of Elijah was often identified with a book attributed in the Talmud to the prophet Elijah. The view was strengthened by the fact that many Agadic as well as Halakic statements quoted in the Talmud in the name of that book are also found in this Midrash. It was, therefore, held that the *Seder Eliyahu*, if not entirely identical with the book referred to in the Talmud, contains at least a large part of that book. Later scholars, however, considered it a compilation of late Gaonic times. This problem is discussed at length in the introduction. A large part of it is devoted to an extensive delineation of the reflection of the character of the prophet Elijah in the entire Jewish literature. Friedman collected all Talmudic and Midrashic statements, all legends and stories about him scattered in numerous books and arranged them in proper order. He then discusses the relation of this Midrash to the Talmud and other Midrashim and endeavors to determine its date. In this matter, he is more conservative, and in spite of two statements in the book itself which indicate its composition to have been around the middle of the

10th century, he, claiming the statements to be later additions, asserts that the book was compiled even before the close of the Talmud in Palestine. It is his view that there were in Amoraic times collections of Agadic statements circulating under the name of the prophet Elijah, and it was from these collections that the passages in the Talmud are quoted, while one of these collections is the Midrash under discussion. He closes the introduction with several chapters on the character of this Midrash, its style, and language. Its character differs from all other Midrashim for its homilies are not arranged according to the verses of a book or section of the Bible, but deal with such topics as right conduct, love of Israel, and redemption. Likewise is its style different, for it is pure Hebrew and contains poetic passages. The view of the editor regarding the date of the book is untenable, but this does not detract from the import of the long introduction.¹

96. *ENCYCLOPAEDIAS AND CONCORDANCES* (J. M. GUTTMANN AND H. J. KOSSOFSKY)

i. Attempts were made by Jewish scholars in earlier generations to arrange and discuss parts of the subject-matter of the extensive Talmudic literature in encyclopaedic form. One devoted his attention primarily to legal subjects as Lampronti (Vol. II, Sec. 71) did. Another, as S. J. Rapoport, concentrated his efforts on historic, lexicographical, and biographic phases. Such an attempt, but on a more comprehensive scale, was also made in the period under discussion by Yehiel Michael Guttmann (1872) in his *Maṣteah ha-Talmud* (The Key to the Talmud). It was intended as an encyclopaedia of the entire subject-matter of the Talmud, both of the Halakic and the Agadic phases, as contained in its two versions, the Babylonian and the Palestinian. Unfortunately, the work which began to appear in 1906 is still far from complete for in twenty-four years, from 1906-1930, only four volumes covering the letter *Aleph* have appeared. However, these four volumes alone are an important contribution to Talmudic literature and testify not only to the wide erudition of the author, but to his skill in method, organization of material, and logical analysis.

The work, as a whole, contains two kinds of articles, alphabetically arranged: (a) articles dealing with subjects, whether laws, customs, or history, or biography; (b) articles which merely refer to a proverb, or

¹ For a more detailed account of the character of the *Seder Eliyahu*, see Vol. I, pp. 145-147.

a Talmudic statement, or a difficult lexicographical expression. It follows, of course, that the first type of articles constitute the bulk of the work. They are primarily conceptual, and thus an article very often contains numerous subjects which are subsumed under the wide concept and consequently, some of the articles, on account of their length, are small treatises in themselves.

As an illustration of the method and scope of the work, we will describe briefly the content of the very first article, *Ab*, (Father). It is divided into seven sections. The first deals with the numerous laws bearing on the relation of the father as progenitor, in regard to both legitimate children and illegitimate, namely, those born from prohibited relations; and in addition it embraces laws regarding the status of the family of a proselyte, of children born from parents one of whom is a slave, and similar matters. The second section deals with the proof for the legal establishment of fatherhood, the testimony of the father and the mother in cases where such testimony is necessary. The third treats of cognates, intercourse with whom constitutes incest. The fourth and fifth embrace the subjects of transmission of characteristics by the father to the children as well as laws of inheritance, and the duties of the father, both moral and legal, towards the children. The sixth section discusses the powers which the father exercises over the children, especially during their minority. The last section covers all other laws related directly or indirectly to the fundamental concept of the father as the head of the family in the narrower sense. That article alone occupies fifty-five pages. Then follow articles in which the term father is used in a borrowed sense, such as when applied to God or the Patriarchs. The text is mainly limited to sources in the Talmud in both versions, but the notes give parallel references to the *Tosefta* and Tannaitic Midrashim, and indicate the discussion of the laws and the decisions contained in the works of the leading codifiers from Al-Fasi to the *Shulhan Aruk*. Equal comprehensiveness, and often even greater, is evident in articles of Agadic or biographical content if the subject warrants extensiveness. Thus, the article *Abraham* occupies one hundred and twenty pages and embraces every possible phase of his life and activity, as reflected in tales, legends, and statements scattered throughout the entire Talmudic and Agadic literature.

The full scope of the work can be comprehended only from the long article, which forms a treatise, *Erez Yisrael* (Palestine). The author approached the writing of this article with wide erudition and with

a feeling of love and reverence for the Holy Land. Palestine, he says, in his preface to the treatise, symbolizes, in contrast to Egypt which represents in its pyramids and monuments a material conception of life, the ideal striving of humanity towards things spiritual. As the land of the prophets and seers, it visualizes to the beholder the ideals of humanity which they were the first to promulgate, and which may become a reality in the distant future. As such, it was described and glorified in the extensive Talmudic and Agadic literature through the ages. It is this reflection in all its phases which the author attempts to reproduce in this article or treatise.

The treatise is divided into six chapters. The first treats of the geographical and topographical features of the land, as well as of the flora and fauna as described and discussed in Talmudic and Midrashic sources. The second deals with the relation of the land to Israel and the Torah, that is the attitude of the Patriarchs and the prophets towards it, its holiness, destiny, desolation, restoration, and similar matters. The third chapter surveys the political phase, namely the conquest of the land, division among the tribes, laws depending upon the conquest, the status of the proselytes and the Gentiles in the land, and the position of slaves. The fourth has for its theme the land and its relation to the Temple and the cult of sacrifices, as well as to worship in general including prayers. The fifth embraces the special laws depending on the possession of the land from both the religious and political aspects. The final chapter treats of the longing of the Jews during the ages for settlement in Palestine, especially from its religious aspect, and of the position of Palestine in Jewish life as compared to Babylonia during the Talmudic period. It includes also a number of sections on the variations of customs and observances as practiced in these two lands. A detailed index completes this treatise devoted to Palestine.

It is to be regretted that the work was not continued, but the volumes published form a valuable contribution to Jewish learning though we at times miss a critical attitude or results of scientific investigation.

ii. Another attempt to arrange the contents of Talmudic literature, far less comprehensive in its scope and less systematic, but aiming to unite the oral with the written law, was made by Baruch Epstein in his *Torah Temimah* (A Complete Torah). His purpose was to collect all interpretations of verses found in Talmudic literature, including, in addition to the two versions of the Talmud, also the

Tosefta and the Halakic Midrashim, and arrange them according to the order of the verses in the Bible. His work, printed together with the text of the Pentateuch, was first published in 1901, and it has since gone through several editions. He displays great skill in arrangement making the necessary changes in the passages quoted. At times, an interpretation or a homily contains several subjects derived from verses in different places. He separates such passages in their component parts and joins each to the proper verse. At other times he shortens the interpretation and extracts its principal statement, while at still other times he adds explanatory remarks. The author also added a commentary on the passages which evinces great Talmudic learning in the legal part, and rational homiletic sense in the Agadic. Little attention, though, is paid by the author to the corrected readings in the various texts of the passages from these books, which were offered by scholars in their critical editions of Tannaitic Midrashim. The work is valuable for a better understanding of Talmudic derivation of laws from the verses of the Pentateuch and to preachers in search of homiletic texts.

iii. A similar compendium but on a larger scale and in a more scientific spirit was undertaken by Menahem Mendel Kasher (1895) in his *Torah Shlemah* (The Complete Torah). It is supposed to be an all-embracing encyclopaedia of interpretations and explanations of all verses and words of the Pentateuch in the entire Targumic, Halakic, Agadic, and Midrashic literatures, as well as in the standard Kabbalistic works. In other words, he collected the material not merely from the two versions of the Talmud as Epstein had done, but from the entire literature up to the Gaonic period, and following the conservative view that the *Zohar* and its constituent parts date from earlier times, he included quotations from them also. As a result, the number of quotations and comments referring to each verse is very large, running at times, as in the case of the first verse in Genesis, into hundreds. The work, as planned, is to be issued in many volumes, and thus far the first ten, covering the Book of Genesis have appeared. These contain the Hebrew text together with the various versions of the Targum, namely that of Onkelos, pseudo-Jonathan, and the fragmentary Palestinian, as well as the text of Rashi's commentary. Then follow the quotations in the chronological order of their composition.

The compendium contains also a commentary and notes in which various readings and explanations of difficult passages are given. In

this commentary the author displays extensive erudition, for his remarks are drawn from the entire Jewish literature, and he quotes copiously from all Mediaeval commentators and the works of leading scholars, and numerous comments of his own. Kasher also pays attention to modern Jewish learning and utilizes to a great extent the works of scholars in the field of Talmudics and Agada. He consulted the critical editions of standard texts for the proper readings of difficult words, and utilized a number of manuscripts of Midrashim from which he culled Agadic interpretations hitherto unknown. The author endeavored to guard himself against unnecessary repetition of quotations, for the same passages are often found in the various Agadic works and different Midrashim, and yet he was not entirely successful, for often he quotes several similar passages referring to the same word in the text.

iv. An anthology limited to Agadic literature, entitled *Sefer ha-Agada*, was compiled by Ḥayyim Nahman Bialik and J. H. Rabnizki. It was the purpose of the compilers to make the treasure of Agadic lore, scattered in both Talmuds and in numerous Midrashim, accessible to all, even to those who are unable or unwilling to delve into the sources. They, therefore, compiled thousands of statements and passages from that extensive literature, containing thoughts and reflections on every phase of Jewish life, history, religion, sentiments, hopes and aspirations, and arranged them in systematic and logical order. The method of arrangement varies. In the first volume the subjects are arranged in chronological order, namely, the statements and passages are grouped around episodes in the history of the world and the life of the nation, beginning with creation and ending with the destruction of the Second Temple. In the second volume the material is grouped according to the leading *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*, in which not only their own statements, but all stories and legends relating to their lives are included. In the third volume the spiritual life of the nation is dealt with. Israel and the nations, Torah, Palestine, the Exile, the Messiah, redemption, the Sabbath, and prophecy, are some of the principal subjects. The fourth volume is devoted to metaphysical and religious concepts, such as God, prayer, reward and punishment, and similar matters. The fifth and sixth volumes embrace social life, ethics, attitude to the world and nature, and kindred subjects. The anthology possesses other distinguishing qualities besides its logical order. These are the selection of the proper readings and versions of the passages quoted, the transla-

tion of the Aramaic-Agadic statements into Hebrew, and the brief, lucid comments on difficult expressions or words. The compilers, however, were careful to preserve the Agadic style in all its poetic nuances. The anthology thus is not only a useful work but also one of highly literary quality.

v. A work of exceptional value for the study of the Talmud and the first of its kind in the field was composed by a Palestinian scholar, H. J. Kossofsky (1873). This is the *Ozar Leshon ha-Mishnah* (A Concordance of the Mishnah). It is the first complete concordance to the entire Mishnah containing not only verbs and nouns, but also adverbs, prepositions, and particles. The order, as in the best Biblical concordances, consists in listing the words with all prefixes and suffixes, and complete quotations are given as illustrations and not mere references to the chapters of the tractates of the Mishnah. A number of articles, especially those on adverbs, conjunctions, and similar words which have several meanings, are usually prefaced with an explanatory note giving derivations, nuances, and the various syntactical usages. If the nuances of the word differ perceptibly, they are divided into several sections, giving to each distinct usage a separate section. Such explanatory notes of grammatical and syntactical content often precede also verbs or nouns if they have several meanings. Kossofsky is not a trained philologist, yet he possesses a keen linguistic sense; and his discernment of the shades of meaning of verbs and other words is, on the whole, keen and correct.

The text of the Mishnah he used is the ordinary one, but he corrected his quotations according to the *editio princeps* (1548) and other editions and gave for a part of the concordance the various other readings in notes. The words at the head of the articles are vocalized, and thus the work is of great help to students of the Mishnah which is, as a rule, unvocalized. However, not being versed in classical languages, he announces at the end of the work, with seeming modesty, that students should not rely on his vocalization of words derived from foreign languages.

The stupendous concordance, being the work of one man who received little help from organizations or institutions of learning, could not, under the circumstances, appear in print without numerous errors in references and arrangement of the tens of thousands of illustrations. The author added a number of lists of corrections and addenda, but these lists are insufficient, and there are still many errors left as well

as irregularities in arrangement and duplications. Such shortcomings, however, detract but slightly from the great usefulness of the work. Our author is very ambitious, and he was not satisfied with his concordance to the Mishnah but also prepared one for the *Tosefta*, of which thus far only the first volume, covering the letter Aleph, has appeared. It follows that the concordance to the *Tosefta* which is larger than the Mishnah, should be likewise large and accordingly the first volume which contains close to seven hundred pages folio size constitutes only a fifth of the work, the rest of which is still in manuscript. The order and arrangement of this concordance are the same as that of the Mishnah. The value of the work is even greater than the earlier one, for the *Tosefta* is, to an extent, still a closed book even to the students of the Talmud, and the concordance will contribute towards the furtherance of its study.

97. TREATISES, ESSAYS, MONOGRAPHS, AND BIOGRAPHIES

i. There were numerous books written by scholars which deal with special phases or aspects of Talmudic literature, the life reflected there, or the sciences contained therein. Of these, the logic of the Talmud and the methods of interpretation employed by the *Tannaim* and *Amoraim* occupied the attention of several scholars, of whom Adolph Schwartz (1846-1931) is the leading one. He wrote a series of lengthy monographs on a number of rules of interpretation of Rabbi Ishmael (Vol. I, Sec. 43) which constitute the fundamental link between the oral and the written law. These rules, on account of their importance and the complexity of their application formed the subject of commentation and elucidation by scholars in Mediaeval and modern times. But none have treated the subject with such thoroughness and scientific analysis and at such length as Schwartz. He began his studies with a monograph on the rule known as *Gezera Shawa* (Formal Analogy or Analogy through Expression), entitled *Die hermeneutische Analogie in der talmudischen Literatur* (The Interpretative Analogy in Talmudic Literature), published in 1897. He followed it with the Monograph, *Der hermeneutische Syllogismus in der talmudischen Literatur* (1901), and later (1909) published *Die hermeneutische Induktion in der talmudischen Literatur*.

The first of these treatises deals, as said, with the *Gezera Shawa*, which is a rule of deduction by means of analogy of expression. It means that when like or similar words are found in two passages of

Scripture, we apply the same limitation in reference to a certain precept stated implicitly in one passage to the precept mentioned in the other passage where the limitation is omitted. Sometimes, the rule is applied mainly to explaining the meaning of a term in a legal passage, and then its connotation is derived from its use in other passages of the Bible, even if the passage is not of legal content. There are several variations of this rule which is employed extensively in both *Halakah* and *Agada*, and also certain conditions which restrict its use, for since it is based on merely formal analogy the savants of the Talmud were wary of its extensive application. All these phases, nuances, and different applications are discussed by the author with keen logical analysis and elucidated with numerous illustrations in the light of historical development of the usage of this important rule.

The second work is devoted to the rule known as *Kal-we-Homer*, variously called *a fortiori* or *a minori ad majus*. Its usual application is as follows: When of two analagous cases the less important or the lighter one possesses a restriction or a rigorousness in a certain phase, we deduce that the more important one possesses the same property. On the contrary, when the more important case possesses a leniency we apply the same to the less important or lighter one. The origin of this rule is traced to the Bible itself and numerous illustrations from the verses of the Bible are quoted. The *Kal we-Homer* rule is one of the most frequently employed in the entire Talmudic literature and its application is of several aspects. Besides, there are various conditions attached to the conclusions reached by such applications. These are discussed in the treatise in detail and their exact logical implications elucidated. Schwartz devotes himself specially to the determination of the logical validity of this rule. He differs with all previous commentators who see in the rule merely a demand for a proportionate distribution in two related cases. He claims that the essence is similar to that of the Aristotelian syllogism, inasmuch as it contains a process of reasoning from premises, with these differences that it has only one premise and a conclusion instead of the two premises and the conclusion of the syllogism, and furthermore that it does not reason from the universal in content to the particular in content, but from the less inclusive to the more inclusive term.

The third treatise analyzes and discusses the rule known as *Binyan Ab*. This rule which is also one of the most frequently employed in Talmudic literature is usually explained by commentators as general-

izing a special law, and making the explicit case the "*father*" of a large family of cases. This rule possesses several forms and a number of aspects and the clarification of the meaning of the aspects of this rule occupied the attention of many scholars in earlier times. The author reviews the opinions of earlier savants in chronological order and criticizes them and then proceeds to expound his own conception at great length. He traces its development through the Tannaitic literature and discerns several stages, the earlier one which has its basis in analogy and was limited only to two cases, and a number of later ones which finally culminated in induction. In this last one we reason from a specific case to all similar cases, or to all cases included in one class, namely those which have a fundamental characteristic in common. In other words we apply the specific rule stated in one case to all cases in the class. In general, Schwartz endeavors in all his works to prove that the rules of interpretation are essentially of a logical nature and resemble in essence the Aristotelian logical ways of reasoning, though they differ in form. For this purpose he endeavors to don the rules in the garb of logical formulae. He undoubtedly contributed much to the understanding of Talmudic methodology, but he often overreached himself by his excessive keenness, and his attempts to recast Talmudic reasoning in the mould of Aristotelian logic appear forced.

Schwartz wrote also two other methodological monographs, one on antinomies and the other on quantitative relations in Talmudic literature. In addition, he wrote a work on the Halakic difference between the schools of Hillel and Shammai especially emphasizing the leniencies of the latter in certain cases and the severities of the former in the same cases, and giving the reasons and motives for the apparently reversed attitudes.

ii. Chanoch Albek's work, *Untersuchungen über die halachische Midraschim* (Studies in the Halakic Midrashim) throws light on another phase of Talmudic literature. It deals primarily with the structure and composition of these Midrashim (Vol. I, Sec. 44) and only indirectly with some features of their methodology, mainly external. The book contains six chapters. In the first, he endeavors to prove that there existed a work which was the prototype of the Halakic and Agadic exegesis contained in the *Midrashim* on the last four books of the Pentateuch, upon which these drew. This he supports by the following arguments: First, that the simpler forms of exegesis of verses or single words are incorporated in all four; second, that a number of explana-

tions of verses, found in all four *Midrashim*, are similar in content but different in form; and third, that numerous passages containing interpretations are transposed from one verse to another where they hardly seem to fit. From this it may be inferred that they were simply borrowed from a source where they were originally appended to the proper verse and were transposed because of the similarity of expression or content. He proves his points by citation of numerous passages from all *Midrashim*.

The second chapter is devoted to the differences of expression and terminology used by the various *Midrashim*. The differences are systematically arranged and tabulated. These show with comparative certainty the division of these books into two groups, the one containing the *Sifra* on Leviticus and *Sifré* on Deuteronomy, and the other the *Mekilta* on Exodus and *Sifré* on Numbers. The third chapter deals with the question whether the *Midrashim* in their present form were known to the *Amoraim* of the Talmud. Albek concludes from numerous citations and comparisons of Halakic statements (*Baraitot*) mentioned in the *Midrashim* and the Talmud that these *Midrashim* were unknown to the scholars of the Talmud. He admits that there were numerous collections of Tannaitic statements upon which they drew, but denies that these *Midrashim* in the present or similar form, had already been compiled in spite of the fact that *Sifra* and *Sifré* are mentioned in the Talmud. These, he claims, were not identical with our books. He assumes that the latter were compiled by an editor at the end of the Talmudic period and from the evidence of the language it can be inferred that the place of compilation was Palestine.

Thus far our author agrees to a certain degree with the views expressed by other scholars, but on the question of the schools from which the books emanated he differs radically. It was usually assumed by many scholars, and especially championed by Hoffman that the *Sifra* and *Sifré* on Deuteronomy emanated from the school of Akiba, while the *Mekilta* and *Sifré* on Numbers originated in the school of Ishmael. Albek attempts to disprove this assertion and claims that these two groups are mainly compilations by two different editors from different sources. He admits that the editor of the *Mekilta* and *Sifré* on Numbers used sources from the Ishmael school considerably, but in an equal measure also from other sources. Furthermore, even the *Sifra* and *Sifré* on Deuteronomy used, to a degree, sources from the Ishmael school. The author defends his view skilfully with many citations, yet

he is not convincing, and one may still be inclined to relate the two groups to the above-mentioned Tannaitic schools, though this view has many discrepancies.

The last two chapters deal with the marks of differentiation of sources in the Midrashim and with fragmentary Midrashim on several books of the Pentateuch respectively.

iii. Quite a considerable number of essays, monographs and treatises were written on the archaeology of the Talmud and on Jewish life as reflected in Talmudic literature. The leading work on the subject, however, is that of Samuel Krauss' *Talmudische Archaeologie* in three volumes. It is the most comprehensive treatise, far surpassing all preceding attempts in the field and covering practically every aspect of life. The volumes are divided into sections, each of which surveys an important phase of life. Thus, volume I deals with : (a) the house and the furniture of its various parts; (b) foods and their preparation; (c) clothing and ornamentation; and (d) the care of the body. The subjects are treated in great detail. Under "the house" are included discussions of the various sites on which buildings were erected, of materials and tools, of the shape, size, and form of the various parts of the house, of its decoration and beautification, and even of the laws and customs pertaining to the selling and renting of houses. Similar detailed treatment is given to the subject of furniture. Almost every article of use mentioned in the wide Talmudic literature is described in its various forms and usages. The section on foods and their preparation is likewise treated in an extensive manner. Not only are the principal classes of food, such as bread, meat, vegetables, and fish as well as the modes of their preparation, baking, cooking, roasting, and pickling discussed, but also the utensils and kinds of stores in which they are sold are described and explained. Nor are water and the various types of wells left out. The degree of detail into which the author enters can be imagined from the fact that he devotes several pages to the description of the cooking of an egg. He himself, however, explains that he uses this item as an illustration of the high degree of development of the art of cooking among the Jews. In similar manner does the author treat clothing and ornamentation. He begins with a description of the materials used for clothing, their preparation, including a brief account of weaving and spinning, and proceeds to the discussion of the garments and concludes with a description of the kinds of ornaments and jewelry. The section on the care of the body surveys the function and

form of the bath among the Jews, types of cosmetics, the Jewish ideal of beauty, and hygiene and medicine as practiced and understood in the Talmudic period.

Thus far the life of the individual was surveyed; the second volume is devoted to the life of the family in the wide sense. It embraces sections on (a) family life in the narrower sense; (b) agriculture in its various phases; (c) trade and industry; and (d) transportation and commerce. The first not only gives the numerous relations of the individual to the family group from birth to death, including marriage and inheritance, but also the customs of mourning, the status of extraneous members of the family, such as slaves and hired laborers, and a discussion of the place of animals in the family economy. The second section discusses the tilling of the soil and production of foods in their various phases, such as raising of grain, gardening, and wine and oil culture. The third deals with different trades, principally with leather work, stone work, carpentry, and metal and glass work. Certain other trades, such as spinning, weaving, and tailoring were discussed previously in connection with the preparation of garments. The last section deals with roads, bridges, means of travel including navigation, stores, and markets, ways and means of purchase and acquisition, classes of merchandise and their prices, and imports and payment of duty. It includes also two essays on weight, measures, and coins, and time reckoning and eras used among the Jews in general and in commercial transactions in particular.

The third volume embraces a survey of social life including such subjects as friendship, giving of presents, treatment of guests; entertainment including music, sports, and public festivals; education covering writing and books; and finally instruction discussing the school both in its physical aspect and its curriculum. From all that has been said it can be seen that the work is extensive and that it gives an adequate conception of Jewish life, both public and private, during a large part of Jewish history in the two principal centers, Palestine and Babylonia. The author displays great erudition and a thorough acquaintance with the Talmudic, Agadic, and classical literature. The thousands of data accumulated and masterfully arranged in the text are derived from a still larger number of isolated statements scattered through the wide fields of literature, references of which are given in the notes. In fact, the space the notes occupy in the volumes exceeds that of the text. In addition, some of the notes are so lengthy that they form short essays of

a philological nature. That in a work of such magnitude, based to a very large extent on deductions, there is room for error and incorrect opinion on certain matters follows from its very nature. Yet such aberrations do not minimize its importance. It is only to be regretted that the author did not extend the scope of the work to include also such aspects as organization of communities, political relations, and the reflection of the general life in Talmudic literature.

The work was partly translated into Hebrew by the author himself under the title *Kadmoniyot ha-Talmud* (The Antiquities of the Talmud). The translation covers only a small part of the work—one half of the first volume.

iv. Of the other important works on the archaeology of the Talmud or on certain phases of it, there are to be noted the two Hebrew books of A. S. Hershberg (d. 1940) *ha-Ereg we-Ta'asiat ha-Ereg* (Textiles and the Textile Industry) and *ha-Halbashah ha-Ibrit ha-Kedumah* (The Early Hebrew Clothing). The first book forms the first volume of a larger work planned by the author under the title, *Hayé ha-Tarbut be-Yisrael* (Cultural Life in Israel), but thus far only that part has appeared. The book is a highly specialized and detailed treatise on the industry of the preparation of clothing material in all its aspects. Hershberg, besides being a Talmudic and general scholar, was for a large part of his life a textile manufacturer who knew the industry in its practical aspect, and in addition made a special study of its theoretical aspect investigating all the phases through which cloth passes from its earliest stage as raw material to the finished article. He was thus fully equipped for his task. It is therefore distinguished by its completeness and thoroughness.

The work is divided into three sections, the first one dealing with the raw materials, the second with spinning and weaving, and the third with dyeing and final preparation for the market. The treatment is all-embracing. Each section is preceded by an introduction surveying the general features of the subject, and is followed by the treatment of the material in Talmudic times. Thus, he discusses, in the section on raw materials, the texture of wool, its mode of shearing, and the various species of lambs and the wool they produce. The same is done in regard to silk, flax, hemp, and cotton. The survey of these subjects in Talmudic times is given in detail, describing the origin, qualities, and modes of preparation of the various raw materials. Allied subjects, such as the kinds of wool, silk, and flax used for different types of garments

as well as brief histories of the commerce in these materials in that period are included.

The same method is used in the other sections. In the second, a detailed description of the methods of spinning and weaving and the various tools and machines used for that purpose in modern times is given, and is then followed by a description of these processes in Talmudic times, the comparison elucidating the matter more effectively. In the third section, we are told all about dyeing, the colors, sources of various dyes, and kindred matters. The exposition of the process of cloth dyeing as reflected in Talmudic literature is detailed without omitting a single item. Of special interest is the long description of the derivation of the dyes from different sources, from inorganic matter and from plants and animals.

We have thus a comprehensive description of an important industry in all its stages, which reveals to us an extensive aspect of Jewish life of the period. The book is a contribution not only to Talmudic archaeology, but also to Hebrew philology, for the author, who uses a large number of technical terms, had to search for them throughout the literature, and in addition also to coin many words in order to express himself adequately. It also possesses some exegetic value for the Talmud, for in the course of the description, quotations from all parts of literature are cited, and frequently explained in a better way than by the commentators who lacked the technical knowledge.

The second work deals with the modes and kinds of clothing in Biblical times and, like the first, is distinguished by a display of erudition. Hershberg, as stated, also wrote a larger work on the same subject which deals with clothing and garments in the Talmudic period, but it was never published.

v. Of the many short monographs on phases of Talmudic archaeology there are to be mentioned Arthur Rosenzweig's *Das Wohnhaus in der Mischna* (The Dwelling House as Described in the Mishnah) and his *Geselligkeit und Geselligkeits Freuden in Bibel und Talmud* (Socialibility and Its Joys as Reflected in the Bible and the Talmud); Adolph Rosenzweig's *Kleidung und Schmuck in Talmud* (Clothing and Ornamentation in Talmudic Times); J. Krengel's *Das Hausgeräth in der Mischna* (House Furniture in Mishnaic Times); M. Winter's *Die Koch- und Tafelgeräte in Palestina zur Zeiten der Mischna* (Cooking and Table Utensils in Palestine in Mishnaic Times); S. Klein's *Tod und Begräbniss in Palestina zur Zeit der Tannaiten* (Death

and Burial in Palestine in Tannaitic Times); and J. Weinberg's *Armenverwaltung bei den Juden in talmudischen Zeitalter* (Charity in Talmudic Age).

vi. Of the works dealing with medicine in the Talmud, the most comprehensive is J. Preuss' *Biblisch—talmudische Medizin* (Biblical and Talmudic Medicine). It surveys the entire subject in many phases. Beginning with an essay on the function and position of the physician as reflected in the Bible and in Talmudic literature, he devotes chapters to the discussion of the following subjects: Blood letting, surgery in the Bible and the Talmud, pathology and therapeutics, and the internment of the dead. He then proceeds to describe the views found in these literatures on diseases of important parts of the body, such as diseases of the eye, of the skin, of the oral cavity, of the stomach and intestines, of the nervous system and of the genital organs of men and women. He concludes the work with several chapters on hygiene. The author shows great skill in arrangement of the subject and an extensive knowledge of Talmudic literature.

vii. An important work dealing with the knowledge of the Talmudists of pathology, anatomy, and skin diseases was written by J. L. Katzenelson in Hebrew, entitled *ha-Talmud we-Hokmat ha-Refuah* (The Talmud and the Science of Medicine). It is really a collection of essays, written by him at various times and contains three large essays and several small ones. The first of the long essays is a kind of commentary on the third chapter of the tractate of *Hulin* of the Babylonian Talmud which deals with *Terefot* i.e. diseases and deficiencies in the organs of an animal which disqualify it from being eaten. The author shows that the Talmudists displayed an extensive knowledge of the physiology, pathology, and anatomy of the animals. The second essay, entitled *Ramah Eborim* (248 organs) deals with the anatomy of the human body as described in the Talmud. The statement that there are two hundred and forty-eight organs in the human body is mentioned a number of times in the Talmud, and a detailed enumeration of the organs is given in the tractate *Ahalot*, Ch. I, 5. It must be understood, though, that the Talmudists, for Halakic reasons, call an organ a part of the body which has a bone, some flesh, and a vein. That number, however, does not correspond to the number of bones in the body according to modern anatomists, and the statement called forth not only criticism but even derision on the part of some light-minded medical writers. Katzenelson vindicates the Talmudists, proving that the

number of bones in the body up to the age of twenty-three varies at different times and that at the age of seventeen, the number reaches two hundred forty-eight. The reason for such changes which reduce the number of bones is that in the fingers and toes as well as in other parts of the body, the cartilage which separates the bones hardens and thus joins two bones into one. He therefore concludes that the Talmudists knew their anatomy well, and even dissected bodies² but that these were of young persons of the age of seventeen. He proves his thesis by a detailed discussion of the anatomy of the human body as contained in Talmudic sources. The third essay is devoted to a discussion of leprosy mentioned in the Bible and Talmud from a medical point of view. The shorter essays touch on the laws of purity and impurity in the Bible and Talmud, their hygienic principles and application in the light of modern science, on the disease of hemophilia described in the Talmud, on the composition and quantity of blood, and kindred matters. In all his discussions the author displays great Talmudic erudition, and many of his statements contribute much to the understanding of Talmudic *Halakah* from several aspects. He also added two introductions, wherein he gives succinctly the principles of the histology, physiology, and pathology of the animal and human body, which are of great help for the understanding of his essays. The work is also a contribution to Hebrew lexicography for the author had to find numerous words for the expression of scientific terminology, and consequently not only did he introduce new nuances in old words, but coined a considerable number of his own, many of which were later adopted in Hebrew medical terminology.

viii. Of other monographs on the subject, there may be noted J. Bergel's *Die Medizin der Talmudisten*, which has also an excursus on the anthropology of the ancient Hebrews; L. Kotelman's *Die Ophthalmologie bei den alten Hebräern* (Ophthalmology of the Ancient Hebrews) in which he discusses primarily the diseases of the eye and the various cures mentioned in Talmudic literature; G. Nobel's *Zur Geschichte der Zahnheilkunde im Talmud* (Materials for the History of Dentistry in the Talmud); and Grünwald's *Die Hygiene der Juden*. Of these the second and the fourth works are important contributions to their respective subjects, especially the last which treats of hygiene among the Jews in a comprehensive manner.

² The dissection of the body of a woman by the disciples of Rabbi Ishmael is recorded in B. Bekorot, 45a.

ix. Many essays and monographs were written on mathematics, astronomy, and chronology in the Talmud, and of these the noted are: B. Zuckerman's *Das Mathematische im Talmud*, which discusses the mathematical knowledge of the Talmudists; Sidersky's *Etude sur l'origin astronomique de la chronologie juive* (The Astronomical Origin of the Jewish System of Chronology); and A. Kistner's *Der Kalendar der Juden* in which the principles of the Jewish calendar are expounded from its astronomical and mathematical aspects.

x. The more important works on Talmudic ethics are M. Bloch's *Die Ethik in der Halacha* and M. Levy's *Essai sur la morale du Talmud* (An Essay on the Theory of Morality in the Talmud); and of the shorter essays which treat single subjects, Hermann Cohen's *Die Nächstenliebe im Talmud* (Love of Fellow-man in the Talmud) is the most valuable. There are also several works on pedagogy in the Talmud, such as J. Wiesen's *Geschichte und Methodik des Schulwesens im talmudischen Altertum* (History and Methods of Education in the Talmudic Period); J. Lewit's *Darstellung der theoretischen und praktischen Pädagogie im jüdischen Altertum* (A Statement of the Theoretical and Practical Pedagogy in Ancient Jewry); S. Stein's *Schulverhältnisse, Erziehungslehre und Unterrichts Methoden im Talmud* (School Conditions, Theory of Education and Methods of Instruction in the Talmud); and J. Stein's *Die talmudische Pädagogik* in which he discusses the views of the Talmudists on education in the light of Herbart's philosophy and psychology of education. A more embracing work on Jewish education of which the subject of education in the Talmud forms an important part is B. Strassburger's *Geschichte der Erziehung und des Unterrichts bei den Israeliten von der vortalmudischen Zeit bis auf der Gegenwart* (The History of Education and Instruction Among the Israelites from the pre-Talmudic Period to the Present).

xi. An attempt to present the theory or the philosophy of history of the *Tannaim* and its application to life was made by Nahum N. Glatzer in his *Untersuchungen zur Geschichtslehre der Tannaiten*. He places before himself the task to explain the curious phenomenon of the paucity in Tannaitic literature of contemporary historical data, while there is a multitude of interpretations and records of past events. His thesis is, that the gloomy events of the present formed an exception to their view of history which posited the divine guidance of human af-

fairs according to a just and definite plan. A detailed record of contemporary events would have only aggravated the problem. They, therefore, turned to the past and, in numerous ways, interpreted its events aiming to prove the justice and purposefulness of God's guidance of human affairs, especially in relation to Israel. The specific applications of the interpretation of the past varied. At times it explained the suffering in the present as a punishment for sins, but more often the emphasis was placed on the glorious future which will compensate for the evils of the present. The future is primarily of this world. The *Tannaim* thus removed the contradiction in history which the contemporary events presented. In general our author endeavors to stress that the historical teachings of the *Tannaim* tended to inculcate trust in the justice and goodness of God as well as confidence in the purpose of history.

He contrasts the rational view of history of the Rabbis with the mystic and other-worldly view of the writers of the Apocalyptic books as illustrated by the IV Esdras. The latter considered this world as evil, destined to be destroyed and be replaced by a new one. Consequently, human history has no regular course of development, for the future is not connected with the past. To the *Tannaim*, on the other hand, the future is the goal of a process of the development of a plan manifested throughout history.

Glatzer adduces numerous statements from the entire Tannaitic literature which illustrate the various applications which the *Tannaim* made of their interpretations of past events, and in this consists the main value of the book.

xii. The biographies of individual Talmudists, especially of the leading *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*, also engaged the attention of several scholars of whom J. S. Zuri is the leading worker in the field. He is a prolific writer on Talmudics, and the number of his works in the various branches of the subject is considerable. We shall have more to say later of his treatises on Jewish law, but for the present we shall discuss his biographies of which he wrote the following: *Rabbi Ashi*, the Babylonian *Amora* who acted as redactor of the Talmud; *Rab*, the first of the Babylonian *Amoraim*, the founder of Talmudic study in that country; *Rabbi José ben Haninah mi-Kisrin* (of Caesarea), an important Palestinian *Amora* of the second generation; and *Rabbi Akiba*, the story of the life of the famous *Tanna* of the second genera-

tion. All these are written in Hebrew to which is to be added his biography of Rabbi Johanan, the leading Palestinian *Amora* of the second generation, written in German.

Zuri, who is a Talmudic scholar and possesses also a wide general education as well as an intimate acquaintance with law, collected much material for the lives and characters of these leading *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*. His monographs are voluminous and detailed, for he discusses in special chapters the families of the men described and their environment, giving a fair description of the geographical, commercial, and cultural conditions of the cities in which these scholars carried on their activity, such as Sura in Babylonia and Caesarea in Palestine. He further devotes chapters to their methods of study, to their theology and ethics, and gives full lists of their colleagues and disciples. In addition, he cites numerous quotations from their statements on legal and spiritual matters. All these features greatly enhance the value of the books, and we obtain an adequate presentation of the life, character, and contributions of the men described. These biographies also increase our knowledge of Jewish culture of the period, for in some of them, especially in the biography of José ben Haninah, the author devotes several chapters to the description of Jewish life in the coastal cities of Palestine, particularly in Caesarea.

However, the very abundance of the material and the excessive detail, impair, in the case of Zuri, the value of the biographies. It seems that he is not able to master his material and arrange it in proper systematic order, and as a result, there ensues much repetition and occasionally also contradictions. This is greatly aggravated by his strong desire to develop a favorite theory on the development of Talmudic study in the two centers, Palestine and Babylonia. The theory in itself is interesting, and in fact, opens up a new vista in the history of development of the Talmud, provided it could be proved by sound arguments.

It is briefly as follows. Taking in consideration that study, both in Palestine and Babylon, concentrated in certain localities, such as Judea in the south and Galilee in the north of Palestine, and Sura in the south and Naardea and Pumbedita in the north of Babylonia, Zuri is not satisfied to consider the concentration of study in these centers a result of accidental conditions, but believes that the different schools represent two tendencies in study and that the scholars connected with them actually differed in their outlook upon life, methods of study, and

in many other aspects. In short, he carries through the entire Talmudic period, beginning with the time of Rabbi Akiba and ending with Ashi, the redactor of the Talmud, a kind of dividing line, both in Palestine and Babylonia, between two groups of scholars, the Judaeans and the Galileans. The school of Sura in Babylonia was affiliated with the former, and carried on its tradition, while the schools of Naardea and Pumbedita were related to the latter. Thus, Akiba headed the southern school, and his tradition was carried on by his disciple, the *Tanna* Judah, and was continued through Rabbi Ḥiyya and a group of *Amoraim*, of whom José ben Ḥaninah was a leading member, in Palestine. It then was carried to Babylonia through Rab, who studied in Palestine but went back to his native land, where he established the Academy at Sura, where it was cultivated until it concluded with Rabbi Ashi, the redactor of the Talmud. The Galilean school, headed by Rabbi Ishmael, carried on its tradition through Judah the Prince and Rabbi Joḥanan in Palestine, and then through Samuel the Babylonian, who likewise studied in Palestine, it was transmitted to the schools of Naardea and Pumbedita. Zuri attempts to carry through the line of division between the schools in many ways, even to psychological traits, asserting that all who belonged spiritually to the southern group were prone to find the general in the particular, were inclined to abstract thought, and to the formation of complete concepts. The Galileans, on the other hand, were more of an analytic trend of mind and concentrated on differences between things, and were subtle and dialectical in their studies. Were Zuri to carry through his theory in a systematic, scientific manner, it would undoubtedly have contributed much towards a deeper understanding of the essence of the Talmud. But inasmuch as he does it more by external marks, by mere similarities of statements and often on the basis of fragmentary remarks, his zeal in proving his theory only results in repetition. He reiterates the same arguments again and again in the biographies of Rab, José ben Ḥaninah and Rab Ashi. The excessive detail also contributes to repetition, for desiring to delineate certain phases in the life of one man to its fullest extent, he inevitably entangles himself in digressions on subjects which were already discussed in another biography. He is not satisfied, for instance, with giving briefly a characterization of Rab's immediate family in the book devoted to his biography, but launches upon a long discourse about the family of Ḥiyya, Rab's uncle, which entangles him in a discussion of

Hiyya's relation to the southern group of scholars, a subject which is repeated in the biography of José ben Haninah. We meet with similar repetitions in almost every biographical work of his.

Nor is he very critical in his assertions and his arguments frequently rest on unsound bases. The slightest similarity in the statements of two *Amoraim* is sufficient proof for him to establish a close relation between them, such as making them disciple and teacher, or to assign to them a common place of residence. This zeal to prove a point and the strong desire to carry out a theory bring him occasionally to contradictions of which we will cite one. In his biography of Rab, he devotes page upon page to prove the former's agreement with the views of Resh Lakish, a leading Palestinian *Amora*, a follower of the southern tradition, which implies that Rab, during his sojourn in Palestine, moved in the circle of Resh Lakish. Yet he quotes a story wherein it is told that when a disciple of the former cited a decision of the Babylonian scholar before Rabbi Johanan in the presence of Resh Lakish, the latter asked who is Rab? Zuri offers no explanation for this question. All these facts show the lack of scientific exactness in the otherwise valuable series of biographies of this prolific author, which taken as a whole, are undoubtedly an important contribution to the knowledge of the Talmud.

xiii. The Talmud, in general, has engaged the attention of scholars during the period and numerous attempts were made in various languages by many of them to present its content, nature, and characteristics in a more or less popular manner. The more important of such works are: A. Darmesteter's *Le Talmud*, S. Bernfeld's *Der Talmud*, S. Funk's *Die Entstehung des Talmuds* (The Rise of the Talmud), and J. Frommer's *Der Talmud, Geschichte, Wesen, und Zukunft* (The Talmud, History, Essence, and Future of). The last named work has a philosophic background. It is divided into three parts, the first one dealing with the general history of the Talmud, the second with its essential characteristics and future, and the third consists of a series of lengthy notes on a large number of subjects pertaining to the history of the Talmud, alphabetically arranged.

In the first part, the author places before himself the solution of the problem: How did the metamorphosis in the character of the Jew, which changed him from the type presented in the Bible to the one revealed to us in the Talmud, take place during the ages? In other words, how did the Biblical Jew turn into the Talmudic? He asserts

that there was always in Jewish life "a will to Talmud," namely that the very nature of the Bible required study and commentation and intense absorption on the part of the student in its contents. But the will was not actualized until the beginning of the Greek period, for it needed an external stimulant. That stimulant was furnished by the meeting of the Jew with the Greek civilization. The antagonism of the Greek culture to that of the Jewish aroused the Jews to delve deeper into their own heritage, and borrowing the weapon of the Greeks, the dialectic method, they created the Talmud. After discussing briefly the several characteristics of the ancient sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, the works of the *Tannaim*, the Midrashim and the Talmud, he turns to the second part.

In this part he attempts to delineate the fundamental features of the Talmud which to him seem to be synonymous with Judaism. These are in the main a striving for unity, absoluteness of thought and action, namely avoiding compromises, a striving to world happiness and redemption, and above all, an ethical outlook upon life. Jewish or Talmudic ethics, according to our author, represents a middle way in attitudes toward life. The Jew does not recognize the power of passion as the Greek had done, nor does he flee from life as the Hindu did. He masters passion and enjoys life. Hence Judaism believes in progress. As such, it had a mission and could redeem the world from its low state, and yet the Jews failed in that mission on account of their separation from general life. This tendency to separation and aloofness also stunted the development of the Jewish view of life. Only one Jew was able to carry that view to perfection and that was Spinoza. All these theories are given succinctly and in a dogmatic way without illustrations from Talmudic literature. Towards the end of this part, the author launches upon a Utopian scheme to unite the spirit of the Talmud with that of modern culture, a union which would ultimately conduce to the spread of real humanism in the world. However, this matter, like the discussion on the essence of the Talmud, is dealt with very briefly, and no hints for the realization of that union are offered. In general, it can be said that while the theories expressed are a mixture of truth and error and hardly solve the problems which the author set for himself, yet some of them are stimulating and several of the characteristics which the author imputes to the spirit of the Talmud deserve investigation. The third part, which constitutes the bulk of the book, is the most useful, as it covers numerous aspects of Tal-

mudic literature and is, on the whole, a popular introduction to the Talmud.

98. TRANSLATIONS OF THE TALMUD

Intensive activity was also going on in the field of translation of the Talmud into various languages. Many tractates of the Mishnah were rendered into French and German, and several also into English. Single tractates were also rendered in these languages.

i. The greatest achievement in the field of translation is that of the entire Talmud into German by Lazarus Goldschmidt (1871). The work, in eight volumes, was published during the years 1893-1922, an exceptional accomplishment for one man, even if he devoted the greater part of his life to the task. An important feature of the work is that it contains the text together with the translation. The text is that of the *editio princeps* printed by Bomberg in 1520-23, but he also incorporated all emendations introduced by such Talmudic scholars as Solomon Luria, Joel Sirkes, and Isaiah Berlin, which were included in later editions. In addition, there are given in the notes the various readings contained in the famous Munich manuscript and other manuscripts. The translation is concise and clear, and on the whole, correct, displaying the wide erudition of the author. It also contains notes in German which explain special terms used and comments on difficult passages as well as references to verses quoted, or to Tannaitic passages in the *Tosefta* and Tannaitic *Midrashim*.

Judging the work as a whole, we can say that while it undoubtedly charts to a great degree the "Sea of the Talmud" for those unacquainted with the original, yet it possesses some deficiencies. The translation is too brief and does not always explain sufficiently complicated passages, nor does the translator elucidate fully some Talmudic concepts, the complete meaning of which is necessary to the understanding of the discussion of a subject. It is also to be regretted that the translations of the tractates are not preceded by introductions on the nature, scope, and principles of the content.

ii. The Jerusalem Talmud was translated into French by Moise Schwab and published in eleven volumes in the years 1878-1889. It was an exceptionally difficult undertaking, for that Talmud, besides its rather obstruse language and loose construction, was little commented upon through the ages. The translator, however, overcame the difficulties, to a degree though not entirely.

iii. An attempt was made by J. M. Zalkind (d. 1839) to translate several of the tractates of the Mishnah into Yiddish. Of these there were published *Beraḳot*, *Pea*, and *Demai* in the years 1928-1932. The translation is executed with skill and correctness. The text which is vocalized, is given according to the printed editions, but in the notes, the translator gives the various improved readings. In addition, he also supplies references to the leading codes, such as that of Maimonides, the *Tur*, and the *Shulḥan Aruk*, where the decisions of the laws discussed in the respective tractates are given. Zalkind follows in his translation the commentary of *Rashi* in *Beraḳot* and those of Maimonides, Simon of Sens, and of Bertinoro (Raab) in *Pea* and *Demai*. It is regrettable, indeed, that the savant was not encouraged in his undertaking which would have popularized the Talmud among the Yiddish speaking masses.

iv. Another Jewish scholar, I. M. Rabbinowicz, partly translated into French and partly summarized a large portion of the Babylonian Talmud in a number of treatises bearing the following titles: *Législation criminelle du Talmud* (Criminal Laws of the Talmud); *Législation civile du Talmud*; *Nouveau commentaire et traduction du traité Baba Kamma*; *Nouveau commentaire et traduction du traité Baba Batra*. The first is an abbreviated translation of the treatise *Sanhedrin*, and parts of the treatise *Maḳot*, those dealing with penalties for certain crimes. The second is of narrower scope than the title implies, for it deals primarily with family law and is based on the text of the tractate *Ketubot*. The last are, as their titles indicate, translations of two important tractates of the Order *Neziḳin* (Damages). To these he also added a sixth volume on medicine and paganism in the Talmud, in which he translated numerous portions of different tractates dealing with these subjects. Rabbinowicz's translation, omitting parts of the text thus approaches the form of a compendium possessing many valuable qualities. It is correct and reproduces not only the literal meaning, but often adds explanations which are skilfully integrated with the text. In addition, each volume contains an introduction stating the fundamental legal principles which form the basis of the treatise or treatises translated.

99. JEWISH LAW

Jewish law and the investigation of its development through the ages, especially during the Talmudic period, formed a subject of in-

terest and study for many Jewish scholars each of whom contributed his share to the field of Jewish learning. However, most of the works in this branch are monographs dealing with a certain aspect of Jewish law. No attempt has been made to give a comprehensive survey of the entire Jewish law or even of a considerable part of it in a historical and scientific manner until the twenties of the present century. The development in Palestine of a national life called forth the problem of the application of Jewish law which was, on the whole, codified several centuries ago, to the exigencies and conditions of modern times. The efforts to solve the problem aroused a fresh interest in the study of law, and as a result, we have two important works on the subject written in Hebrew by two scholars, versed both in Jewish and general law.

i. The first is the *Yesodé ha-Mishpat ha-Ibri* (The Fundamentals of Jewish Law) by Asher Gulak (1880-1940), formerly a lawyer in Russia who later settled in Palestine where he composed his work and became instructor in the Hebrew University.

The treatise, though it bears a comprehensive title, deals only with civil law and is divided into four books. The first is devoted to the laws of property, or more properly, to those of rights in property and its transfer; the second, to obligations; the third, to family law, mainly from the angle of property relations and the rights appertaining to them; and the fourth to procedure. The author approaches his subject in a scientific manner, and begins his introduction by stating that his purpose is not only to give a comprehensive view of Jewish civil law on the basis of the Talmud and the Codes, but also to discover the underlying principles of its various parts and to relate the particular laws to the general concepts. He then turns to a short characterization of Jewish law and its differentiation from other systems. All other legal systems, says Gulak, are dependent upon sovereignty, whether of a people or an individual, both for their source and their enforcement, while Jewish law has its source in the religious consciousness of the people and its enforcement is primarily conditioned by its moral sense. As a result, there is an inherent closeness between law and ethics in Judaism, the like of which is not found in any other system of law. This feature, continues the writer, imparts to Jewish law a certain universality, which was strengthened by the peculiar history of the people whose life passed in different lands and environments. Furthermore, the fact that both law and morality have in Judaism one source, namely God and the Torah, helped to preserve the general unity of the

character of Jewish law in spite of the manifold life of the people. With these preliminary remarks, the author turns to his task of surveying Jewish law.

The book on property is divided into two large sections or portals, the first of which discusses the fundamental concepts without which no legal study can be carried on. He begins by enumerating the classes of Jewish laws which are, according to him, (a) laws stated directly in the Bible; (b) those derived by the Talmud through interpretation or added by the Rabbis; (c) ordinances established by authoritative courts through the ages (Takonot); and (d) customs. He briefly describes each of these classes and then discusses the juristic qualification of persons in legal transactions including the subject of agents and their rights and obligations. The concept of determination of mind in legal transactions comes next and is analyzed from all its aspects. He also compares frequently Jewish with Roman law and notes the fundamental differences between the two systems. Thus, he points out that while Roman law emphasizes the freedom of will of the parties as a necessary condition in a legal transaction, Jewish law stresses instead their mental determination to carry the action, and recognize a transaction under duress as valid, under certain conditions.

The second section surveys the acquisition of property and the rights in property. It contains six chapters, three of which are devoted to the definition of the concept of acquisition and the classification of objects to be acquired, modes of acquisition, and the rights of ownership respectively; the other three discuss the rights appertaining to the use of property, mortgages, and possession as proof of ownership. In this are included also the laws relating to renting and borrowing, rights resulting from guarantee, and similar matters. The laws are analyzed and elucidated with keenness and logical acumen.

The second book, embracing all laws and transactions arising from obligations, is likewise divided into two sections or portals, the first of which is subdivided into eight chapters. In the first, the definitions of important legal concepts, such as obligation, contract, and mortgage of property are given and elucidated. In the second, the classes of obligations are enumerated. These are, in general, according to the author, (a) obligations arising from contractual transactions; (b) those arising from damages or torts. These cover a large number of legal relations including those between employees and employers and

cases of trust and guardianship. The subjects of the origin of obligations, modes of their establishment, partnerships, transfer and annulments of obligations, as well as matters connected with written documents are treated extensively in the subsequent chapters. The second section deals partly with detailed aspects of contractual obligations, and mainly with damages and torts. These discussions of the numerous aspects of obligations involve, of course, some repetition of the laws regarding property as the two parts of the civil law are closely connected. A special effort is therefore made by the author to limit such reiteration to a minimum in which, however, he is not always successful. The general treatment of this rather complicated and extensive branch of civil law is distinguished by its lucidity, keen logical analysis of the principles underlying groups of laws, and by the emphasis upon the historical development of the laws and ordinances.

The same detailed and analytical treatment is given to the family law, from the angle of monetary and property relations which forms the subject of the third book. The first two chapters are devoted to general concepts of family, marital union, divorce, levirate marriage, and *Halizah*. The subsequent chapters treat at length the monetary and property relations between husband and wife and parents and children, the marital obligation arising therefrom, laws of inheritance and testaments and guardianship of minors. As in the previous parts, frequent comparisons are made between Jewish and Roman law and the difference between important legal concepts noted. Thus he points out that the distinctive features of the Jewish legal concept of the family are its objectivity and naturalness, on the one hand, and extent of individual freedom granted to its members, on the other hand. He compares the Jewish with the Roman view which bases family relationship mainly on the subjective will of the head of the family. Jewish law bases membership in family only on blood relationship, and recognizes no adoption, and likewise, is the power of the father greatly limited. True, in ancient times he had some rights over his minor daughter, but these fell in desuetude. The case is different in Roman law where the paternal power is supreme. These characteristics are especially evident in the laws of inheritance, where the power of the father in distributing his property in that mode is greatly limited. Of course, a father may divide his wealth in any manner he may see fit, but in the form of gifts, not as an inheritance.

The fourth book deals with procedure and covers that subject in all

its phases. The work, as a whole, is an important contribution to a systematic study of Jewish law and is conducive to its understanding both in its general principles and in its application to life.

ii. The second work entitled, *Mishpat ha-Talmud* (The Law of the Talmud), is by J. S. Zuri, whose biographies were discussed by us above. Like Gulak's, it covers only civil law, but is narrower in scope in two ways. First, it does not deal with obligations; second, as the title indicates, it is limited to the law as presented in the Talmud and does not touch upon its later development and the form which it ultimately assumed in the Codes. It is divided into five parts; the first is a kind of prolegomena to the entire book; the second embraces the law of persons; the third of the family; the fourth of inheritance and testaments; and the fifth of property. The difference in scope is not the only one between the work of Zuri and that of Gulak; there is also a difference in quality. All the shortcomings which we have noted in his biographies are in greater evidence in this treatise. The prolegomena of the first part which is the largest of all are hardly prolegomena to a book on law, but belong more to an introduction to the Talmud, inasmuch as most of these contain the same matter included in his biographies. They deal mainly with the differences between the various schools of *Tannaim* and *Amoraim* in Palestine and Babylonia. His theory of the cleavage between the scholars of the south and those of the north is repeated here at great length. There are a few matters which bear relation to law, such as the rules and manner of decisions, the nature of ordinances, and the relation of Talmudic to Biblical law, but they are dealt with in a very fragmentary way. Nor does the author make an attempt in the work proper to give the fundamental concepts underlying groups and classes of laws and show the relation of the single laws to the general principles. The whole subject matter is given in a long series of statements culled from the Talmud and grouped in sections. Often various opinions are given. The value of the work consists primarily in the collection of the material and its classification in a more or less logical division which should by no means be minimized. It is enhanced by numerous references to their sources in Halakic literature.

iii. Of the other important treatises and monographs on phases and aspects of Jewish law, the following are to be noted: the treatise of the eminent scholar of comparative jurisprudence, Joseph Kohler (1849-1919), entitled *Darstellung des talmudischen Rechtes*, a general

succinct survey of Talmudic law; M. W. Rapoport's *Der Talmud und sein Recht*, treating briefly but with keen legal judgment the subjects of inheritance, gifts, and obligations; L. Fisher's, *die Urkunden im Talmud* (The Commercial Documents in the Talmud), in which the nature and character of this type of document are discussed and elucidated; and I. Lewin's, *Die Chasakah des talmudischen Rechts*, a survey of the law of possession and presumption.

iv. An important monograph on the grounds for divorce and on the bill of divorce in Jewish life and law was written by L. Blau, entitled *Jüdische Ehescheidung und der jüdische Scheidebrief*. It consists of two parts, dealing with the conditions, grounds, and views of divorce in their historical development. The author, surveying the entire literature from the Bible to the Talmud, attempts to show that there was in Israel a constant fluctuation in the views on the dissolution of marriage, swinging from the one which allows the husband complete freedom in divorcing his wife to the opposite view, the indissolubility of marriage. In early Biblical times, he claims, according to the Mosaic law, divorce was a private act of the husband, and his dislike of the wife was sufficient ground for the divorce. Later, popular opinion rose against it and we find the last prophet, Malachi, thundering against divorce. Still later, he asserts, there developed among a certain sect of priests whose views are recorded in the "Fragment of a Zaddokite work" (Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 503-511) the theory of the indissolubility of marriage and the abolition of divorce which subsequently also found expression in the Gospels and the writings of Paul. The main current of Judaism, though, kept aloof from this extreme tendency, but there was by no means a unanimous opinion on the matter. Around the beginning of the Common Era, there were two schools, the Shamaites and the Hillelites; the former held a more stringent view and limited the grounds for divorce only to infidelity of the wife; the latter gave the husband a wider range for divorce, but still demanded definite grounds. The opinion of the Hillelites prevailed, and Akiba, one of the leading *Tannaim* of the third generation, even wanted to abolish the demand for a ground for divorce. But the weight of ethical opinion, as expressed in the Talmud, in Agadic literature and in the Codes, is that there must be a definite cause and ground for divorce. Judaism thus found a middle way between two extremes, the limitation of the dissolution of marriage to well-defined grounds namely, when the continuation of marital life would make for constant strife.

The survey is well authenticated by references to the entire literature including the Aramaic Papyri discovered at the beginning of this century in Elephantine, Egypt, which describe the life of a Jewish military colony at the end of the fifth century B.C.E., and also the New Testament documents. Not all of the conclusions of the author are correct, especially his statement that the Zaddokite sect prohibited divorce,⁸ but the survey as a whole is elucidating.

The second part deals with the bill of divorce and discusses its various phases, such as the different names applied, content, form, language, style, and all other matters connected with it in a detailed and thorough manner. It also contains several facsimiles of the oldest bills of divorce from the *Genizah* in Cairo.

⁸ On this point see Vol. I, 2nd edition, p. 506 where the view of Ginzberg, which rejects the theory first advanced by Schechter that the Zaddokites prohibited divorce, is given.

CHAPTER XI

HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, BIOGRAPHY, AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

100. GENERAL REMARKS

The science of history together with the closely allied subjects, history of literature, biography, and autobiography, which formed one of the staples of Jewish learning in the preceding period, also occupied an important place in Jewish studies during the time under discussion. Much was accomplished in this field by the earlier scholars, and the result of numerous investigations and various studies was utilized as material in the erection of several historical structures, as Graetz's *History of the Jews* and Weiss' *History of Jewish Tradition*, and other important works. Yet, these comprehensive works not only did not retard further study in the several branches of history, but on the contrary, stimulated research and quickened investigation. The half century which elapsed since Graetz and Weiss was, on the whole, a time of discovery and invention in all fields of human endeavor, Jewish history not excepted. Thus, the discovery of the Cairo *Genizah* towards the end of the last century with its exceptionally large mass of historical and literary documents shed an entirely new light on whole periods, as the Gaonic and the early Mediaeval, and also illuminated many dark corners in Jewish literature. The finds, the total sum of which have not been explored even up to the present date, served as subjects of study for scholars in the fields of history and literature and were the bases of numerous monographs. The discovery of the Aramaic Papyri mentioned above, in the year 1904, opened a new chapter in the history of the Jewish Diaspora. These and other discoveries of manuscripts together with the excavations which were going on in Oriental countries including Palestine, resulting in bringing to light many data in the Biblical and early post-Biblical periods of Jewish history, necessitated the rewriting of many chapters in the standard historical work of Graetz.

Equally important were the changes in views and opinions on the part of scholars during the period which affected the interpretation of historical facts and data. On the one hand, there arose scholars from the orthodox wing who, armed with the knowledge of the sources and also with a general education, entered the field of history and combated the views of the liberal historians, interpreting the data in a more conservative way. On the other hand, there were scholars who, imbued with the ideas and views of sociology which places emphasis on the social factor and on the activity of the group rather than on the achievements of individuals, objected to the mode of interpretation of Jewish history by Graetz and his followers. As a result of these factors we have two large and complete histories by two scholars, one belonging to the moderate Orthodox camp, and the other to the liberal group of savants, and a third work encompassing a large part of Jewish history written from the point of view of staunch Orthodoxy.

Much work was also done on particular phases of Jewish history, especially of certain countries as well as of cultural, social, and economic aspects of a number of Jewries. Jewish learning and scientific investigation spread to other centers besides those of Western Europe, and there arose scholars in Eastern Europe and Oriental countries who devoted themselves to the study of the life of their brethren in the lands in which they reside. Thus, a number of blank pages in the life of the scattered people were filled and many problems were solved and elucidated from different angles. The national idea which brought about an intensive and extensive development of Hebrew literature and the establishment of a literary and intellectual center in Palestine also stimulated research in this field in all its aspects and phases. A new interest was taken in these studies, for the delving in the past of the people was henceforth considered not a matter for pride and glory, but a means to understand the spirit of a nation in its totality as revealed in the tortuous course of its long life, and thus be able to map out the way for future activity.

The Yiddishist movement and the tendency for Diaspora nationalism also acted in its way as an impetus towards the development of historical studies. The protagonists of these views, in their desire to create a Jewish culture in the language of the masses, became convinced that belles-lettres alone do not constitute a culture, and turned to such aspects of spiritual activity as history and literary investigation, and a number of scholars delved into special aspects of history and

literature, primarily that of the late Mediaeval period as reflected in the life of the Jews of Eastern Europe and in the Judaeo-German literary documents of the time.

Another feature of the variegated historical literature of the period is the large number of works dealing with nineteenth century Jewish life. To the earlier historians, history meant primarily ancient or Mediaeval history. They lacked both the perspective and the material for chronicling and evaluating the near past. Not so the younger scholars. They possess both; as a result we have several large works on the near past, many monographs on aspects and phases of Jewish life and culture during the century, a number of comprehensive histories of modern Hebrew and Yiddish literatures, and above all biographies in which not only the life of the author's generation but also that of the preceding one are depicted in a vivid manner. We will now turn to the survey of this historical literature, and as in the preceding chapters, our attention will be focused primarily on the leading works and treatises.

101. ISAAC HALEVY AND WOLF YAWETZ

Of the two historical works written in the spirit of Orthodoxy referred to above, the first is the *Dorot ha-Rishonim* (The Early Generations) by Isaac Halevy (d. 1914). The work, which was intended to cover the history of Jewish tradition from early times to the end of the Gaonic period, is of extensive proportions, the four published volumes alone containing close to three thousand pages while three more were left in manuscript. The learning displayed in it is enormous and testifies to the complete mastery by the author of the entire Talmudic literature and also to a fair acquaintance with historical literature in German.

It is furthermore distinguished by frequent keen analytical treatment of the material and by occasional original hypotheses and theories which prove the inventive ability of the author's mind. As such the work should have occupied one of the foremost places in the historical literature of the period, but unfortunately the case is not so. The importance and the value of the work is greatly impaired by several grave defects.

The first is its systemlessness in the ordering of the material, in the arrangement of the chapters in volumes, and in the expression of the author's views upon the writing of history and its documentation.

Halevy, who was trained in the old school of Talmudic study which laid stress upon keenness of mind and sporadic flashes of thought rather than upon concatenation of events and facts and orderly deduction from premises, carried this method into his History. He relied primarily upon his dialectical ability to interpret events and views in accordance with preconceived notions and theories, and disregarded sequence. The systemlessness is evident even in the order of the publication of the volumes. The work was intended to be published in three divisions, the first to cover the history of tradition from early times to the redaction of the Mishnah; the second, from the Mishnah to the redaction of the Talmud; and the third, the Gaonic period. The order of publication was the reverse; the third division was published in 1898, and was followed by the second in 1901, and in 1906 by volume three of the first division—which he planned to treat in five volumes instead of in one, as is the case of the other two divisions—and ultimately by volume five of that division in 1918. This volume was published posthumously. From his short prefaces, it is evident that this backward order was not only that of publication but also of the composition of the work. The same lack of order is noticeable in the arrangement of the material as there is a constant shifting from later to earlier times. Volume three, which is supposed to cover the history from the end of the rule of the Hasmonean kings to the time when Judea became a Roman province, begins with a survey of the reign of Herod, reverts to a discussion of the events and leaders of the period immediately preceding the days of the last Hasmonean ruler, and then to a statement of conditions and a description of activities of the leading scholars during the time preceding the Hasmonean revolt against the Syrians. From there the author continues his discussion forward, beginning with the reign of John Hyrcanus through the days of Alexander Jannaeus and his wife Salomea Alexandra until he comes back to the point where he left off, the last days of Herod. The zigzag method of arrangement is typical of this volume, but the others also display it, though on a smaller scale. There was undoubtedly a certain scheme in the author's mind for this kind of presentation of material, and one who wishes to delve deeper into the matter can discover some logical connection between the sections, but to the reader it is bewildering.

The second defect is lack of form. Not only did the author not master the Hebrew language in which the work was written, dis-

regarding all grammatical rules and regulations and employing a considerable number of German words, but the style on the whole, is peculiar. The sentences are loosely connected and the argument is frequently interrupted by a number of pages devoted to illustrations consisting of long quotations from Talmudic literature, Josephus, and other sources, so that the conclusion is lost to the reader. In general, the number of quotations is exceedingly large and constitutes at least half of the entire work. Besides, the author, when he wrote a chapter, must often have forgotten what he wrote in the preceding one, and repeated a part of the content, so that on the whole there is much repetition.

Halevy's lack of ability to present his views in a literary form was aggravated by his personal character and his tendency in undertaking the writing of the work; these constitute the third grave defect. It is true that he was a great Talmudic scholar and of strict orthodox views, but he most likely had an exaggerated opinion of himself and his theories. Not only was his purpose to prove that the traditional view of the Oral Law is correct, and that the ideas, which posit development and stages in its growth as advocated by such writers as Krochmal, Rapoport, Frankel, Graetz, and Weiss, are erroneous, but he had a personal quarrel with them. It appears to the reader as if the intention of the writer was primarily to prove their ignorance of the Talmud and their insincerity, for he often accuses them of light-mindedness and of falsifying Jewish history. Nor are Gentile scholars spared. Mommsen, Schürer, and others come in for their share of rebuke, though in a much milder form. These accusations and recriminations are so frequent and repeated on almost every page that they form a substantial part of the entire work.

These are undoubtedly grave defects which detract from the value of the book, yet they do not take away its importance for there is much learning and critical acumen in the content which contribute greatly to the understanding of Jewish history and throw light on many of its phases. Due to the bulk of the work and the features spoken of above, it is impossible to delineate its content briefly and to point out the many problems and details which the author with his keen analysis of the Talmudic sources elucidated and illuminated. We will, therefore, concentrate on the third volume of the first division, which is of exceptional importance, inasmuch as it contains the author's main theory on the origin, nature, and content of the Oral Law, the manner

of its tradition during the Second Commonwealth up to the first generation of *Tannaim*, and its embodiment in the Mishnah.

This volume is divided into four sections, the first of which deals, as said, with the time during the reign of Herod. A part of it deals with the political history of the time, in which several just observations on the character of that monarch are made, but its main purpose is to serve as prolegomena to the author's theory on the Oral Law and the Mishnah. Its substance is that the traditional view which maintains that the Oral Law in its great bulk is of Sinaitic origin and was handed down in its entirety through the ages is the right one, and that the additions, changes, or modifications by the generations of *Tannaim* and the scholars preceding them, including the *Soferim*, relate only to minor matters. It is true that he does not discuss the Sinaitic origin of the Oral Law in this volume, nor its state during the First Commonwealth, as he reserved these discussions for the first two volumes, but these premises are implied, and as regards the existence of a fully developed Oral Law during the period of the First Temple, he makes numerous allusions to it. His principal contention is that the fundamental layers of the Mishnah were already arranged by the Great Assembly or the *Soferim*, and that the *Halakah* was not derived by them through the method of interpretation of the verses of the Bible known as Midrash (Vol. I, Sec. 33), but that it was formulated by them entirely out of the tradition received from earlier times. All the differences of opinion on legal matters which we find among the scholars known as the *Zugot* (Pairs) and later among the *Tannaim* from Hillel on, are only in regard to the explanations of portions of the early part of the Mishnah which, due to the turbulent conditions of the times, were forgotten. Likewise, he asserts that the many Rabbinical ordinances (*Takanot*) we find in later times were all known to the scholars of the Great Assembly, and that they existed even in prophetic times. They were merely re-enacted. In short, he ascribes almost everything important in the Mishnah to tradition, and minimizes the value of Midrash and interpretations. He does not prove his theory in a systematic way, but makes an effort in the first section to afford a basis for such proof. This basis is the assertion which he corroborates by a Mishnaic statement that Hillel, when he arrived in Palestine for the first time to study under Shemayah and Abtalion, was already versed in the elements of the Mishnah. From this assertion, Halevy develops a series of arguments, the first of which is that

Babylonia was a center of Jewish scholarship during the entire time of the Second Temple. He then endeavors to prove by analogy and on the basis of several statements in Josephus that the Jews of the Diaspora were in possession of early parts of the Mishnah and even practiced the important Rabbinical ordinances. These assumptions, he claims, disprove the views of the other historians that scholarship during the Second Commonwealth was centered in Palestine and that much of the Oral Law was expanded by the interpretation of the verses employed by the *Soferim* and their followers, and that the first layer of the Mishnah took shape only in the generation of Hillel and Shammai. For, if we assume that even the Babylonian Jews as well as Jews of other parts of the Diaspora possessed parts of the Mishnah in the generations preceding Hillel, it is evident that the foundation of the Mishnah was laid by the Great Assembly and may be even earlier.

The second section is devoted to detailed proof of his theory. Producing numerous citations from the entire Talmudic literature which he interprets in his own way, he endeavors to show that a great part of the Mishnah, namely most of the anonymous statements (*Setam*) hail from the times of the Great Assembly, and that the activities of Hillel and Shammai, of their schools and of the succeeding generations of *Tannaim* consisted primarily in the explanation of the early Mishnah. Each school and scholar had different traditions as to the meaning of the early Mishnah. Thus he explains the controversies between the *Tannaim*. Similarly, he attempts to prove, at great length, by many quotations, his view of the early origin of the *Takanot* and even endeavors to find references to the practice of such ordinances in prophetic statements. He ventures to assert that the large masses of Jews during the First Commonwealth were observers of the Law, though from time to time, they inclined to idol worship, a view contrary to the opinions of most historians, and one which can hardly be supported by proof.

Halevy is aware that the method of Midrash or interpretation of verses became prevalent from the time of Hillel and occupied an important place in the study of the schools, but he explains this phenomenon by asserting that these interpretations or *Derashot* were used by them merely as props to the *Halakot*, but that no new laws were derived through them. His theory that the *Halakot* were transmitted by tradition from early times meets with the serious objection from

the fact of the existence of the two parties, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who differed about the validity of the Oral Law, which fact was interpreted by historians (especially Geiger) to indicate that there were different ways of interpreting the Law. In order to obviate this objection, he propounds, in the third section, a theory that the Sadducees were primarily a political party, the descendants of the Hellenists, who later became the ruling faction. They had no interest in tradition at all, but were forced to observe a part of the Law because of the temper of the people. There were no Sadducean scholars, and their relation to the Law was an arbitrary one. At times, they said that the plain meaning of the verses must be followed, and at times, they offered an interpretation from which they deduced certain laws for certain practices, but they had no principles. These views are stated at great length by the author in hundreds of pages, accompanied by citations of passages and statements from Talmudic literature, which he frequently explains in a forced though keen manner, and accuses the other historians of distorting history and logic and of ignorance of the texts.

In the fourth section, he discusses, in spite of its title, *Tekufat ha-Tannaim*, (The Period of the Tannaim), only the period of Shammai and Hillel, in other words, only the first of the six generations of Tannaim. Here he adduces further proofs for his view that the prime activity of these schools and of the later Tannaim was only to explain the early Mishnah, and that no new *Halakot* were added by them. He even asserts that the famous eighteen ordinances ascribed by the Talmud itself to these schools were not new, but merely re-enacted.

Judging the views as a whole, we can say, that while they undoubtedly cannot be accepted in their entirety, they contain elements of truth. There is no doubt that the Oral Law is not entirely the result of the activity of the scholars of the Second Commonwealth, as some savants maintain, and that a large part of it goes back even to the period of the First Temple. It is also true that a larger part of the Mishnah, than is usually allowed by historians, dates from earlier times, probably even from the period of the Great Assembly, and that Halevy may be right in ascribing sections of it to those times. On the other hand, it is also true that the activity of the schools of the *Tannaim*, beginning with Hillel and Shammai, resulted in the addition of many new laws and ordinances, and that it did not consist

mainly of explanations of the meaning of the early Mishnah. Likewise, Midrash undoubtedly played an important part in the growth of the *Halakah* and numerous laws were deduced by that method. It is curious that Halevy, who charges other historians with omissions, misunderstanding of texts, and many other faults, omitted to discuss the important subject of the seven hermeneutical rules established by Hillel, which were later expanded by R. Ishmael into thirteen and which form the basis of all motivated *Halakah* from Hillel to the close of the Mishnah. If, as he says, all *Halakot* are tradition, and interpretations were only used as "props," why did Hillel find it necessary to invent a whole system of rules, and why were these rules cultivated so intensely by generations of *Tannaim*? Nor does he discuss the famous ordinance of Hillel known as *Prusbul*, i.e., one that was intended to circumvent the Biblical law, declaring debts and loans void during a Sabbatical year. It was certainly an innovation and not a reenactment. Such are only a few of the criticisms which can be mentioned against the author's views and theories.

He continues his theories in volume five of the first division—volume four was never published—which carries the history of the Oral Law to the redaction of the Mishnah, and in the second division where the thread is carried to the close of the Talmud, and to a degree, even in the third division dealing with Gaonic times. The tendency is always to antedate activities and to minimize those of the generations of the period he is dealing with.

In volume five he attempts to prove at excessive length that the entire activity of five generations of *Tannaim* consisted mainly in expounding both the ground work of the Mishnah as well as the views of the schools of Hillel and Shammai which, as stated above, were in turn only commentaries upon the former. He thus denies originality to these *Tannaim* and makes them mere commentators, and also minimizes the act of redaction of the Mishnah by Judah the Prince, claiming that much of the Mishnah in its present form was done by the preceding generations and that Judah and his group of scholars only placed their final stamp on it and improved it. He furthermore claims, in spite of an explicit statement in the Talmud that the most important prayer, the *Shemoneh Esré* (Eighteen Benedictions), was arranged in Yabne after the destruction of the Temple, that all the benedictions were arranged in early times by the members of the Great Assembly. The statement in the Talmud he interprets

forcibly to mean that the scholars in Yabne only improved the wording and not the content. To the objection that the content of at least twelve of the benedictions contains references to the conditions which existed after the destruction of the Temple, such as a plea for restoration of the sacrifices, he replies, that these benedictions had already been fixed during the Babylonian exile when similar conditions existed. The untenability of such view is patent. In this ultra-conservative spirit he goes on to interpret the later periods of the *Amoraim*, *Saburaim*, and *Geonim* in the volumes of the second and third divisions, with this difference that the theories he propounds there are of lesser importance and do not affect the fundamental views of the development of intellectual activity among the Jews as those stated in the other volumes. Consequently, there is no need for us to follow him in his tortuous path.

Judging this erratic and exceedingly bulky work as a whole, it is only fair to say that, in spite of the gravity of its defects, we can not deny to it importance, which consists more in its negative and critical aspect than in its positive. Halevy, in the long course of his discussion, corrected a large number of historical details in the works of earlier scholars. Besides, his extremism may serve as a check against views of scholars who veer in the opposite direction, and endeavor to minimize the force of continued tradition in Jewish history, making the complex Oral Law a result of haphazard causes and imaginary conditions. No new history of the ramified subject of the Oral Law can be written without consulting the work of Halevy.

ii. Of great value and usefulness is the second historical work written from the traditional point of view, the *Toldot Yisrael* (History of Israel) by Zeeb Wolf Yawetz. Its value lies not only in the fact that it has a wide scope, covering a large area of time and events, and that it is free from the grievous faults in the work of Halevy, and is written in a lucid and highly literary style, but lies mainly in the spirit with which it is permeated and the method of its narrative, both of which impart to it a unique quality in historical literature.

When Yawetz began to write his history in the early nineties of the last century—the first volume was published in 1894—Graetz's History had already been completed and published for over a decade, and parts of it had already been translated into Hebrew. Weiss' *History of Tradition* (Vol. III, Sec. 89) which was originally written in Hebrew was also partly published. There was, therefore, no need

for a scholar to undertake the writing of a new and complete Jewish history for the purpose of imparting mere knowledge of data and events. Nor could Yawetz with his comparatively limited general education improve upon Graetz in exploring new historical sources except the particularly Jewish. The purpose which moved him to undertake the composition of a new Jewish history was, therefore, of an entirely different order. It was, as he says in his preface to the first and second editions of the work, a twofold one. First, he intended to emphasize and reveal the uniqueness of the spirit which made the history of the Jews of a *sui generis* type which cannot be measured by the canons of other histories, and second, to record and elucidate, as far as possible, the metamorphoses which took place in the inner life of the Jews during the ages as a result of external causes and factors. These aims required not only a change of the center of emphasis from external events and forces to the inner recesses of Jewish life, but an identification with the spirit of the people. Graetz also was aware of the uniqueness of the Jewish spirit and was quite at home in Jewish sources, for he was a lover of his nation, possessed of a rich imagination, and endowed with historical intuition. But all these qualities were greatly limited and conditioned in their activity by the spirit of rationalism which permeated his writings. The constant struggle between his love of and loyalty to tradition and his rationalism warped many a judgment of his, and distorted his views in numerous chapters of his history. The case was different with Yawetz. He, as a conservative, to whom tradition represented historical truth and needed but to be revealed, was not affected by rationalistic qualms, but was mastered and overpowered by intuition. He considered his work a sacred task and undertook it in a spirit of holiness. As he says: "I made up my mind not to approach this holy work until I had submerged myself in the pure living waters of prophecy and Agada, for only then I knew that not my spirit, the spirit of an individual, would speak in my work, but the spirit of my eternal people would find expression in it and guide my pen." Such a statement can hardly be matched in the writings of historians to whom history was primarily a science and whose aim was to arrange past events in the external logical connection of cause and effect. To Yawetz the writing of Jewish history was more of a vision purporting to depict and portray the past life of his people as a vivid panorama

constantly growing out of its kernel and expanding in successive stages.

Such a view in the writing of history is undoubtedly the source of many handicaps in the formation of proper and correct historical judgments, for it limits criticism and causes the writer to assume an apologetic attitude and cover many a fault in the life and activities of the outstanding men who form the subject of the history. But it also has great advantages, inasmuch as it affords a penetrating glimpse into the inner workings of that life and reveals many phases hidden to the more objective writer.

The results of Yawetz's view or philosophy of Jewish history as far as they were embodied in the work proper are the following: First, a concentration upon Jewish sources, exploring them to the limit; second, an attention to detail rather than to discussions of general principles of causes and forces; third, a vivification of events, characterization, and finally, a unique method in description and narrative.

That method is probably the greatest contribution of our historian. It consists in making the sources themselves tell the story. The History is, in large measure, a grand mosaic constructed out of thousands of fragments culled from the entire Jewish literature—and the author makes each verse or statement yield a particle of history. The above statement about the method, however, does not mean to imply that the narrative consists of quotations, though such abound and are artistically integrated in the text. The text itself is, on the whole, given in the author's fine style, but each line or two are authenticated by reference to a verse, a Talmudic statement, or other source, from which the fact is supposed to have been derived. The ability of the author to derive historical minutiae from single verses or statements is remarkable. Each page, therefore, has numerous references. Another important feature of the method is its simplicity. The grand mosaic is so well constructed that there is no cleft or crack between its minute parts. This is especially evident in the Biblical period where the author smoothes out in his narrative numerous incongruities and contradictions found in various passages in the Bible. This is, of course, done by interpretation, which at times is ingenious. Matters which present problems are treated in notes or appendices at the end of the volumes, where the author defends some of his views which need corroboration. This effort at excessive simplicity in the

presentation of the life of the people, especially of the distant past, is frequently uncritical, but it is ingenious and refreshing. Even the critical student may find in this History a certain interpretation of events given from a new angle, or data hitherto hidden, and contradictions reconciled.

Turning from the brief characterization of his views and method to a somewhat more detailed survey of the work, we can say that Yawetz's conservatism is expressed in extreme form in the two and one half parts devoted to the Biblical period. In his narrative of events of this span of time, he follows the Bible closely with only slight deviations, which are based on interpretation of passages in a more liberal spirit. Not only are the historical portions of the Pentateuch considered genuine history in all details, but the Book of Chronicles as well. He considers the numerous passages which tell of certain facts in early Jewish history though not mentioned in the Pentateuch, as genuine traditions preserved in the nation, and accordingly he integrates them in the narrative of that time as facts. Thus, he traces on the basis of some passages in that book the beginnings of industry as well as literary activity in Israel to the time of their sojourn in Egypt, fortifying his assertion by a Midrashic statement, and he similarly antedates other types of activity.

The deviations from the strictly orthodox conception of the Biblical period are not many, but the few are important and indicate concessions to modernism. While he accepts, without questioning, the miracles related in the Bible, he attempts to modify several. Thus, the crossing of the Red Sea was effected by a strong wind which swept the waters aside; the walls of Jericho fell because the Jews stormed them, and not because the Shofar was blown, as related in Joshua, VI, 15-17; and Elijah merely disappeared and did not ascend to heaven in a fiery chariot. He omits some of the miracles, as the speaking of Balaam's ass and the stopping of the sun by Joshua. All these modifications and omissions he affects very artistically indicating that the verses can thus be interpreted. In the case of Elijah, he relies upon a statement in the *Seder Olam*, the historical book written by the *Tanna* Rabbi José (Vol. I, Sec. 74).

Yawetz also deviates in several important points from the orthodox view in regard to the date of composition of certain books of the Bible, for while he believes in the unity of the Book of Isaiah and in the Solomonic authorship of Proverbs, Canticles, and Ecclesiastes, he

admits that Chas. IX-XIV in Zechariah were written by another prophet, and that the Book of Psalms was not composed wholly by David, who included a few poems by men preceding him, as stated in the Talmud,¹ but that it is a collection of poems composed by various singers from the time of David to that of Ezra and Nehemiah. That a number of Psalms were composed by David himself goes without saying. He therefore classifies the poems according to periods and even utilizes the Psalms as sources for historical data. His appendices on the Psalms are a fine literary contribution.

He grapples also with other difficulties of the Bible, such as the chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah which does not correspond with certain dates of events for which we have the testimony of Assyrian documents. He solves that by antedating the beginning of David's reign to the year 1059 the earliest date proposed by any historian—which allows him to fix the division of the kingdom in the year 979, nine years earlier than the date assumed by Graetz. This, in turn, makes it possible for him to accept the Biblical chronology of the Kings, though even then he is forced to allow interregnum of seven years before the reign of Hosea ben Elah, the last king of Samaria. The small number of exiles carried into Babylonia both at the time of Jehoiachin and at the fall of Jerusalem, as stated at the end of II Kings and the Book of Jeremiah, troubles him and he attempts to solve the problem in two ways, first by supposing an earlier exile in the reign of Jehoiakim, and second, by asserting that the number of exiles stated in the Bible refers only to those who settled in the Babylonian capital but does not include the others who were scattered throughout the lands of their captivity. Yawetz is well aware of the views of the critics on many matters and in the appendices he attempts to defend the traditional conceptions, but he is far from thorough in his refutation of those views. He also devotes several notes to the defence of his own deviations and he finds support for his liberal opinions in the statements of the Rabbis. All these indicate strenuous efforts to harmonize the views of Orthodoxy with the more fundamental liberal concepts of Jewish history, and he succeeded in a measure.

A fine feature of his treatment of Biblical history are his two chapters on the material culture and the civilization of the Jews during the period. Both are masterpieces of mosaics, inasmuch as the facts

¹ Babyl. Tal. Baba Batra 14b.

are drawn entirely from verses of the Bible, and yet the portrayal is complete without omitting a detail. To these should be added the exceedingly fine chapter on the views, teachings, ethics, and laws of the Torah which, in spite of its brevity, affords the reader an adequate conception of the Torah as a whole. The value of the chapter is enhanced by the exalted spirit in which it was written.

In the treatment of the period of the Second Commonwealth, there reigns a freer spirit. The author is still conservative and attempts to harmonize his views with those expressed in the Talmud and Midrash regarding certain historical data, but when facts are at variance with statements he parts company with the savants of the Talmud. Thus, in spite of the opinion in the Talmud which is repeated many times that the period of the Second Commonwealth lasted only four hundred and twenty years, which forced the Talmudists to compress the time elapsed from the return from Babylon to Alexander to thirty-four years, he arranges his narrative in accordance with the true data and gives the proper dates of the arrival of Ezra and Nehemiah and allows sufficient time for the activity of the Great Assembly. While he follows the Talmud in ascribing the closing of the Canon to the members of the Great Assembly, and even places this act at the beginning of their activity which, according to him, took place in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (ca. 440), he admits that certain parts of the Hagiographa were added later, at intervals during the entire period of the Great Assembly which he extends to 199 B.C.E. He thus practically delays the final redaction to the beginning of the second century B.C.E. Moreover, though he does not state it explicitly, he refers several times to the visions contained in Chas. VII-XII of the Book of Daniel as contemporary with the events they describe, which took place in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; this reference implies that the chapters were included in the Canon even later than the above-mentioned date. He also suggests that the Daniel who was thrown into the den of lions is not the hero of the earlier chapters, but a descendant of the former. Darius of the story he identifies with Darius Notus who reigned one hundred years after the first Darius. This is done in order not to prolong the days of the Daniel of the earlier chapters. The Book of Daniel emerges thus a composite work which begins with the early days of Nebuchadnezzar and ends with the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The activities of the Great Assembly are given a fair share in

forming and moulding the standard type of Judaism. It is they who fixed the three daily prayers and even arranged certain forms for recitation, but unlike Halevy, he admits that most of the benedictions in the *Shemoneh Esré* were added later, and some even after the destruction of the Second Temple. He further states that the first day of the second month (Tishri), which in the Pentateuch is called merely a "Day of the Sounding of the Shofar," was turned into New Years Day in those times and that the belief in immortality was stressed and made an active force in life by the Great Assembly. He also differs with Halevy in stating that the method of interpretation or Midrash used by the *Soferim* was an important factor in the development of the Oral Law, though he lays great stress on tradition. Similarly, though influenced by the former's views on the rise of the Mishnah, he admits greater development in its formation and does not antedate ordinances or deprive the *Tannaim* of originality by making them mere commentators.

The period, as a whole, is treated by the author in great detail—he devotes to it almost three parts of the work—both the political and spiritual aspects are elucidated in their minutest data, with the exception of the rise of the sects which he treats rather briefly and uncritically. The origin of the Pharisees he traces back to the days of Ezra and identifies them with the group mentioned in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah as *Nibdalim*, i.e., separated from the ways of the masses who did not observe the Torah. The word *Perushim* he derives from the root *Parash*, i.e., to separate, hence the terms *Perushim* and *Nibdalim* are identical. The origin of the Sadducees he ascribes, in one place, in accordance with the Talmudic tradition, to Zadok and Baitus, disciples of Antigonos, who denied reward and punishment after death, but he does not explain how they developed into a mighty party. In another place, though, he speaks of the Sadducees, in the manner of Halevy, as close followers of the Hellenists. However, with the exception of this and several other points, the conservatism of Yawetz in this part of his History harmonizes well with good historical judgment and research, and in addition reveals the inner phase of the unity of the Jewish spirit in the course of history.

In volumes six, seven, and eight, which cover the period from the destruction of the Second Temple to the close of the Talmud, our historian is at his best. His affinity with the spirit of the Agada, his

love for tradition, its bearers and propounders, his attention to the inner phase of Jewish life as well as to every particular of its expression, made Yawetz the historian par excellence of the Talmudic period. This period in Jewish history, the warp and woof of which forms the literary activity of the *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*, found in our author the true chronicler. With painstaking care and with a feeling of reverence, love, and admiration, he draws often in the very words of the men he describes, a series of pictures of the lives, teachings, conduct, and ethical views of the leading *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*. These portraits are distinguished by vividness and illuminated with the glow of emotion. His attention to biography by no means impairs the narrative of the political events nor the evaluation of the great literary compilations of the Talmud and the Mishnah. In succinct but comprehensive surveys, these edifices of the learning of the ages are characterized from all aspects. Our author, who was one of the brilliant stylists of modern Hebrew literature and who was endowed both with a poetic soul and keen linguistic sense, pays special attention to the style and poetic features of the Agada in general, and to the Agadic statements of a number of *Amoraim* and *Tannaim* who distinguished themselves in this matter in particular; some of the notes at the end of the books contain small collections of the sayings of these men, a feature which completes their portraits.

The ninth volume, embracing the span of time from the close of the Talmud to the middle of the Gaonic period (500-800), was the last one published by Yawetz during his life time. This period during which important changes in general and Jewish life took place, such as the rise of Islam and its conquest of Palestine and Babylonia, the development of the Arabic culture which brought the Jews under its sway and opened new avenues of intellectual activity, was also distinguished by intense literary production of an original nature, as the *Massorah* and the first bloom of sacred poetry. It is to these phases to which a large part of that volume is devoted and the treatment of which is permeated not only with keen linguistic penetration and poetic insight, but is also tinged with originality.

Yawetz left in manuscript material which carries the story almost to modern times. For a number of years nothing was done with these manuscripts, but recently, Dr. B. M. Lewin who bought the rights to both the published and the unpublished volumes began to issue the subsequent parts, and thus far volumes X-XII were published. How-

ever, the posthumous volumes can hardly compare in their completeness to their predecessors. The historical contribution of the author rests primarily on the nine volumes of the published work. The history of Yawetz, though it does not startle us by explorations into fields unknown, nor is it much of an improvement on that of Graetz in regard to the structure of Jewish history, yet possesses a unique value of its own and fully justifies the purpose the author set for himself—to give voice to the innermost feelings and thoughts of the soul of the nation.

102. SIMON DUBNOW

Simon Dubnow (1867), who can probably be considered the greatest historian of the period under discussion and whose *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes* in ten volumes forms a landmark in Jewish historiography, represents in his work, in contradistinction to Yawetz and even to Graetz, the secular national view of Jewish history, which was dominant in intellectual and literary circles of the younger Jews during the last two generations. Though born in Mstislaw, a small town in the province of Mohilew, and raised in an environment of piety saturated with the traditional type of Jewish learning—his father, Ben Zion, was considered a distinguished Talmudic scholar—he quickly emancipated himself from the spirit of his surroundings, and following the path of many gifted Russian Jewish young men, devoted himself to secular studies. In the year 1880 he came to St. Petersburg intending to enter the university at the capital, but failing in his entrance examinations, he turned to Russian Jewish literature as a means of livelihood. His first literary steps were made in the Russian Jewish weeklies, *Razswyet* and *Russki Yevrei* to which he contributed publicistic articles on various topics. Soon, however, he became a member of the staff of the important Russian Jewish monthly *Voskhod*. It is in the pages of this organ that Dubnow began to gradually develop his multifarious historical and scholarly activity. For over a decade, due to the fact that the other members of the staff were little versed in Jewish studies, he performed the function of the “learned Jew” in the editorial office of the monthly. All articles bearing on Jewish history, literature, or thought, and even reviews on books dealing with any aspect of Jewish learning were written by him.

This kind of work widened his knowledge and gradually deepened his interest in Jewish history. As early as 1881, at the age of nineteen, he contributed to the *Russki Yevrei* a long article entitled *The Develop-*

ment of Jewish Thought in which he endeavored to define the most important intellectual moments in the history of Judaism. In those years he was wholly under the influence of the German liberal school of Jewish learning, and in that article he inclined towards religious reforms. Similarly, he was, in the eighties, an opponent of the national idea which then made its appearance in Jewish life. Gradually, whether through the historical studies, or through events in Jewish life, he came closer to the national idea though he never espoused Zionism.

The decade of the eighties of the last century were for the young historian years of preparation for his future task. He studied much and searched for a way of expression. At first he devoted himself mainly to the history of the Jews in Russia and Poland, and for years collected material from communal archives and other sources, and finally began to publish the results. In 1889 and 1890 he published a long article in the *Vokshod* on the spread of Zaddikism, in which he delineated the history of the institution of Zaddikism in the Hassidic movement. In the years 1890-1893 he continued with a series of articles on the Hassidic schism. Simultaneously he published in the same organ a number of other studies in Russian Jewish history. All these articles were intended as prolegomena to a large work on the history of the Jews in Poland and Russia. However, the work was never published in Russian, and was only issued in an English translation in 1916 in this country.

Meanwhile, something occurred which turned Dubnow from his studies in Russo-Polish Jewish history to the idea of issuing a complete translation of Graetz's History under his editorship, and he prepared to write an introduction to it. Accordingly, he published in that year a series of articles entitled *What Is Jewish History?* in which he attempted to give both a philosophy and a general outline of that history. The articles were never published in book form in Russian but were issued as a book both in German and English. They clarified to him his deviation from the point of view held by earlier historians and he determined, since the translation was not realized, to write a Jewish history in the Russian language himself. He began with a popular historical work in three volumes published during the years 1901-1906 to which he added a fourth in 1914. During the years of the War and the following years of the Revolution (1914-1922) he rearranged and enlarged his history, and continued to improve it until it finally appeared in 1929, again not in Russian but in German, in ten volumes.

During all these years his point of view kept on changing, but in a gradual and moderate manner. Between the first essay on the subject in 1893 and the introduction to the History in 1929, there had elapsed a period of over thirty years. Yet the gap between the two is not so wide; in the former he began to turn towards a secular conception of Jewish history, and in the latter the turn was completed. It is on the basis of these two essays that we shall attempt a survey of Dubnow's conception of Jewish history.

In the earlier essay, Dubnow is still, to a degree, under the influence of the views of Zunz and Graetz on the meaning and conception of Jewish history, but the differentiation from them is already evident. He does not, like Graetz, attempt to prove that the Jews throughout their existence constituted a nation despite their dispersion, but takes the matter for granted. Nor does he, like the former, speak of two combined entities, the body and the soul, namely the people of Israel and Judaism, but calls the subject of that history a spiritual people, unique in the family of nations. By the use of this term, the historian meant to emancipate Jewish history not only from the earlier theological conception which laid stress primarily on Judaism rather than on the Jews, but also from the dualism of Graetz, for the stress is laid now on the people, on the experience of the group, and on its social consciousness. This is evident from his exposition of the significance of Jewish history. Like many other thinking liberal men of his time, to whom the bond of tradition and religion seemed to have lost its power, Dubnow was forced to find a *raison d'être* for the continued existence of the Jews as a separate and unified group, and like them, he found it in nationalism, or more explicitly, in the national feeling and the idea. The question then arises what is the content of this nationalism? This he finds in the historical consciousness, composed of various elements, physical, intellectual, and moral, plus habits, views, emotions, and impressions. This consciousness, which is a complex of ideas and psychic predispositions and may be termed the "Jewish national soul," is present in the soul of every individual, and it is this force which keeps him within the fold even if he emancipates himself from the spell of tradition. He admits, though, that this consciousness is subject to the process of rise and fall, and he asserts, therefore, that a study of history will strengthen it and conduce to its development.

It is true that to Zunz and to Graetz, too, the study of history was a means for strengthening Jewish consciousness in the hearts of the

young, but that consciousness was primarily religious, while to Dubnow it is mainly group consciousness of a secular nature. Hence, he removes the center of interest of the study of history from the sphere of religion to that of the social group and its struggle for self preservation.

Yet, in spite of his new attitude towards Jewish history and the purpose of its study which he enunciates in that essay, when he wishes to describe its content, he finds that it consists—at least in the period of Exile—mainly in intellectual activity and in the capability to endure persecution. In other words, thought and suffering form in him, like in Zunz, the warp and woof of the greater part of Jewish history. Again, his division of the periods differs but little from that of Graetz, except in nomenclature. Thus, he calls the time of the Second Commonwealth the spiritual-political period, the very name given to it by Graetz. The span of time from the close of the Talmud to the end of the nineteenth century he divides into four periods which he calls: (1) the Gaonic, (2) the Rabbinic-philosophical, (3) the Rabbinic-mystical, and (4) the period of enlightenment, all of which bear the stamp of Graetz's classification with minor changes. However, he also affixed sub-titles to two of the periods, as hegemony of the Spanish Jews and the hegemony of the German-Polish Jews, and these have significance, for they indicate a new trend in division of history. Yet, the primary titles indicate that Dubnow at that time had not yet clarified to himself his conception of Jewish history, and in fact, he states so himself in his introduction to the larger work.²

The case is different in regard to the view expounded in his introduction to the *Weltgeschichte*. Here he rejects entirely the theological view of his predecessors and propounds explicitly what he calls the sociological approach to Jewish history. "We, of this generation," says he, "understand that our people through the ages did not only think and suffer, but also constructed its life under various conditions as a distinct social group. The purpose of historiography is then to reveal and lay bare the ways and phases of this construction."³ It follows, according to this view, that the subject of Jewish history is the nation, its rise, growth, and struggle for existence. The will to live is the primary factor in that colorful history. In earlier times, it expressed itself also in political forms of life, but during the greater part of Jewish history,

² *Weltgeschichte*, Heb. tr. Vol. I, p. 6.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

mainly in social forms. Not being able to overlook the important role of the spiritual and intellectual activity of the Jews during the ages, he makes its various phases means employed by the will to live in its process of realization and weapons of defence in the struggle for existence of the group. Thus, in the conflict of the Pharisees and Sadducees he sees not a religious division but primarily a struggle for power. Again, the removal of the *Sanhedrin* to Yabne after the destruction of the Temple was not mainly for the purpose of founding an academy for study, but for laying the basis of a new center of Jewish social life, in which, he admits, the law held sway.

The sociological conception of Jewish history affects, according to Dubnow, the scope and method of historiography. As to the first, historians must not only emphasize important national moments and record leading data, but they must stress the social factors and forces, and in addition, investigate and evolve the economic factors which influenced the process of history. In regard to the second it evolves an essential change in the division of history into periods and in arrangement of material. The line of demarcation must be based on social-national trends and not as hitherto on religious-literary. In the early political period, the lines of division must follow the relations of the Jewish state to the great empires of the East. In the long period of Exile the division should be according to geographic centers, namely, emphasis should be laid upon the largest center of Jewish population which is also distinguished by its activity. Accordingly, he divides the entire history into two large periods, the Oriental and the Occidental. The first is further subdivided into (a) the absolute Oriental, i.e., from about 1200 to 332 B.C.E., to the downfall of the Persian Empire; (b) the Oriental-Occidental, from the beginning of the rule of the Hellenic Empire over Judea to the destruction of the Temple, 332 B.C.E.-70 C.E.; (c) the period of the great Jewish centers, the Palestinian under Roman, Byzantine, and Arabic sway, and the Babylonian under Persian-Arabic rule, 70 C.E.-1000 C.E. The Occidental is again subdivided into three secondary periods (a) the time of the hegemony of three great European centers, Spain, France, and Germany, 1000-1500; (b) the period of German-Polish hegemony, 1500-1789; and (c) the modern period. In spite of the emphasis upon the geographic factor, Dubnow was aware of the difficulty of arranging the historical material according to this principle, for it would have resulted in a series of historical monographs, and he therefore wisely states that he plans to use a combination

method, namely, one based on both chronological sequence and hegemony of centers; that is while the history is treated within the compass of segments of time, the story of the Jews in the leading center is given precedence over that of the lesser ones, and occasionally a leading movement, or trend of thought, or event takes precedence. These, then, are in brief the view and the conception of Jewish history of Dubnow and the resulting principles which lie at the basis of his great work. While reserving our judgment of their validity to the end of the survey of the work itself, we may make the following remarks. Our historian was quite aware that the entire content of Jewish history cannot be compressed within the sociological frame. He therefore explains that all that his "sociological conception of Jewish history" connotes is the shifting of emphasis to the people as the object of that history, and that phenomena are to be explained from the point of view of the will to live of that entity in its long struggle for existence. By no means, says he, does he intend to minimize the effects of religious and spiritual factors, but he merely rejects the metaphysical-theological principle which makes Judaism the center of gravity in historiography rather than the people.

i. We will now turn to an estimate of the History as a whole, and see how far the author really carried out the principles he advocated in the introduction. We will begin with a short comparison of the general character and scope of the work as well as the scholarly equipment of the author with Graetz and his History. Both were, to use Carlyle's apt expression, artisans and artists of history, but the artisanship of each differs. That of Graetz consisted, to a very great extent, in a mastery of the extensive Jewish literature in addition to that of the external sources. And since in his time the material for the edifice of a complete Jewish history was not fully available, his artisanship expressed itself not only in the construction of the edifice but also in hewing the stones for that edifice, in gathering the material, and in collecting many facts both from non-Jewish and Jewish sources. Dubnow was spared the work for he found ready material in Graetz and consequently was able to turn his attention to the art of construction and his artisanship expressed itself more in that direction. In fact, he says distinctly in the introduction that the primary task of the historian is the synthesis of the numerous facts and data into one whole and the building of the edifice. On the other hand, our author, writing more than half a century after Graetz, had at his disposal the result of the important discoveries of

inscriptions, papyri, the hoards of manuscripts of the *Genizah*, and of decades of scholarship and research; he was thus able to incorporate a considerable amount of new material which presents certain epochs in an entirely new light. We must also take in consideration the new material gathered by him from archives and hitherto unexplored literary sources on the Polish-Russian Jewish history, a subject treated inadequately by Graetz, and that Dubnow covers an additional period of history, as it extends to 1914, while Graetz stopped at 1848. Furthermore, he was not subjected to the rationalistic proclivity of Graetz (see Vol. III, Sec. 80) which was the cause of many a prejudiced judgment in his History. Dubnow, possessing a more objective attitude towards events and personalities, formed in numerous cases fairer and more equitable judgments than his predecessor. All these features give the *Weltgeschichte* a certain superiority in a number of phases. But due to his point of view and conception of Jewish history this excellence is expressed mainly in the external aspects, namely, scope and contact with events and trends in the general world and range of political and social relations. The case is different with the inner aspect of Jewish life and its numerous metamorphoses and reactions of the spirit of the nation to external conditions and forces. Here our historian falls short of the mark in comprehensiveness and penetration. We will illustrate both the excellencies and shortcomings by a brief survey of the author's treatment of his subject.

The difference between Dubnow's presentation of the external aspect of Jewish history and that of the internal is evident, in his treatment of the Biblical, or as he calls it, the absolute-Oriental period embracing the long span of time from 1200 to 332 B.C.E. Free from theological and metaphysical prejudices, he is not restrained by tradition and is at liberty to treat the period from the point of view of liberal Biblical historians, both Jewish and non-Jewish. The portions of the Pentateuch bearing upon the early history up to the conquest of Canaan are treated by him as legend and folklore, possessing only a kernel of historical truth. The other historical books of the Bible are admitted as historical sources with reservations, and the narrative follows them quite closely. However, though he adopts the critical point of view he displays great respect for the tradition of the people and is, on the whole, moderate in many points.

The external phase of the history of the period is presented in a detailed manner with much new material derived from discoveries.

However, the first epoch of this span of time, namely, from Abraham to the entry into Canaan, is treated rather briefly and the narrative bears the stamp of a strain on the part of the author to reconcile the radical critical view with tradition. The Patriarchs are to him symbols of great historical events in the dim history of the Jewish people, namely, Abraham represents the separation of the Hebrew group from the Semitic stock and its arrival in Palestine 2000 B.C.E., while Isaac and Jacob represent the subdivision of that group into different nations and the shelling out of the kernel of Israel. He is, however, not averse to accepting their historical personality, though, this is not explicitly stated. The sojourn in Egypt and the Exodus he admits as historical facts, but explains the last event in a natural manner as the escape of the Hebrew tribes at a time of political confusion in Egypt. Moses was a historical personality, the leader of these tribes, who laid the foundation of unity among them supplying the religious factor, namely by converting the hazy notion of a God common to all Semites into a definite concept of a national God who chose this people as his own. He also gave them some laws at Sinai in the desert, the nature of which our historian does not explain, but intimates that they were a special elaboration of similar political and social laws of the Babylonians. In this he relies upon the similarity of the code of Hamurabi and those in the Book of the Covenant (Ex. 21-24).

The succeeding epochs, those of the Judges, the early Kings, and the time of the two kingdoms fare better, for the narrative is full and extensive. In general, it follows closely, as said, that of the historical books with numerous additions from the inscriptions, and integrates the events in Jewish history with those of the general world at the time. The political factor is greatly emphasized and certain events as well as activities of personalities are explained from that angle. Thus, while Elijah is given full credit for spiritual activity, Elisha is spoken of merely as a political propagandist. There are, of course, deviations from the Biblical narrative, but they are usually justified by the author by describing the Biblical account as the belief of the people or as a popular legend. There are very fine chapters on the cultural and social conditions in these epochs. The chronology given in the Bible is synchronized with the records of the Assyrian kings and the dates of important events as given in the inscriptions, and the latter is usually followed.

The epochs of the Exile and the one following it are presented very

lucidity. All data from extra-Biblical sources throwing light upon the political situation are included, and the social conditions of the Jewish settlements in Babylon and Egypt during the Persian period are well delineated. A special section is devoted to the description of the life of the Jewish colony in Egypt based on the papyri which were discovered in Elephantine in the year 1904. The economic and political status of the Jews in Palestine during the last hundred years of Persian rule are given sufficient space and the existence of the Great Assembly is reluctantly admitted as a concession to tradition, and its activities are described. Another concession is the admission that the event told in the Book of Esther actually took place, though on a smaller scale; the book itself, however, was written later and contains imaginary embellishments. Taking the narrative of the period as a whole in its political, social, material, and cultural aspects, it represents a fine specimen of historical writing.

The case is somewhat different with the author's presentation of the inner spiritual and religious development during the period. Abandoning the traditional view of revelation and continuous religious inspiration, the author finds it difficult to explain the unique phenomenon of the intense spirituality and loftiness of religious conception as embodied in the Pentateuch. Accordingly, there is confusion and contradiction. Steering clear from the extreme critical view, he assumes that the Book of the Covenant (Ex. XX-XXIV) was written and known in the time of the Judges, and furthermore, that the Ten Commandments had prefaced it. Such an assumption would, of course, imply that the Jews at that time had arrived at pure monotheism and had conceived God as the Creator of the world, for the Commandments clearly state both views. Yet at the same time he asserts that in the epoch of the Judges the Jewish belief was only henotheism, namely, a view which acknowledges a superior God among other gods, and that this God is the national deity. Continuing to relate the religious development, he ascribes the composition of the larger part of Genesis and the stories of Moses to the time of David and Solomon and informs us that they were continuously recast by prophetic writers in the spirit of purer religious conception, and that in the eighth century, due to the prophetic activity, more chapters were added until by the end of that century, the first two books of the Pentateuch and a part of Numbers were already composed. He also believes that even parts of Leviticus were in existence, but were kept secret by the priests.

Deuteronomy was found in the time of Josiah, but unlike the radical critics, who believe it to have been a new book, our author allows its previous existence and thinks that parts of it were written early and others were added gradually, but that the book was kept hidden. A similar secrecy he ascribes to the Book of Leviticus which, though known before, was written down in the time of the Babylonian exile. With all other critics he assumes that the final redaction of the Pentateuch took place in the time of Ezra and the *Soferim* who followed him, and it is to this age that we owe the lofty and religious moral spirit which permeates portions of Leviticus, usually called the Book of Holiness. It is evident that this view of the gradual growth of the Pentateuch hardly explains the spiritual development of Israel during the Biblical period. The prophets of the eighth century are made by our author, as by all Biblical critics, primarily responsible for the evolving of the pure monotheistic conception as well as for the lofty ethical views of Judaism. And yet he himself admits that Deuteronomy which embodies to a large extent such views was gradually compiled by unknown writers. Does this fact not indicate that the religious and moral currents were much wider and penetrated deeper into the consciousness of the people, and that probably there was a source which was common both to the Pentateuch and to prophetic literature. Furthermore, what was the environment out of which the prophets themselves arose? Certainly, it was not one saturated with a spirit of henotheism or the confused God conception which our historian along with other critics supposes to have held sway in the preprophetic epoch. A historian whose prime motive is to lay bare the Jewish soul through the ages should have pondered upon such a question.

The treatment of the epoch of the *Soferim* and that of the Great Assembly is likewise deficient in regard to its inner aspect. The great metamorphosis in the life of the Jews which made Judaism what it was during the following ages, and which took place during that time is not elucidated. The emphasis is placed mainly on the redaction of the Pentateuch, while the activity of the *Soferim* in regard to the Oral Law is only referred to. No attempt is made to explain their methods of interpretation of the written law nor to describe the spirit which animated them. The account of the closing of the Canon, institution of prayers, and religious ordinances is exceptionally brief, and as far as that part of the history is concerned, the accounts of Graetz and Yawetz are superior to that of Dubnow.

The excellencies and shortcomings of the "Weltgeschichte" are equally noticeable in the second volume devoted to the second period of Jewish history from 332 B.C.E. to 70 C.E. The material is well arranged in three books, each of which marks a distinct epoch in that period. Much new material is used in elucidating the political and social factors and numerous erroneous data are corrected by the results of later scholarship. The scope is wide and includes a number of chapters devoted to the Jewish Diaspora in which the life of these settlements, both the external and the internal, are described. Much space is also devoted to the cultural life and full accounts are given of the Apocryphal and Hellenistic literature. Of special interest and value is the chapter on the rise of Christianity in which a comprehensive account is given of the early stages of this religion. In all these there is displayed erudition and good historical judgment. On the other hand, the inner aspect of Jewish life in Palestine, namely the religious and spiritual activities of groups and leading personalities in Palestine proper is treated with brevity. In spite of his statement in the introduction that he views the rise and development of the Pharisaic and Sadducean parties as political and not as religious groups, he added but little to substantiate this view, which in fact, as he himself states, was already recognized by his predecessors. Nor does he explain the puzzling fact that the record left us of their controversies, both in Josephus and in Talmudic literature, emphasizes mainly the religious differences in observances and views. Nor are we enlightened as to why we have no records of the political views and of the secular literary activities of the Sadducees whose world view was, according to our author, distinctly secular. The space allotted to the development of the Oral Law during the period and to the activities of the leading scholars known as the *Zugot* is exceedingly curtailed. In general it can be said that the part of Jewish history which is derived mainly from the Talmudic sources is inadequately presented by our historian.

The excellence of Dubnow's method in his division of the periods and arrangement of historical material is exemplified to a great degree in the third volume covering the period from 70 to 1000 C.E., but is limited to the history of the Jews in the East. Graetz, in the two volumes devoted to the same period, deals also with the history of the Jews in European countries. Our historian's method not only concentrates the reader's attention upon the important events within a limited area, but enables him to treat certain aspects in a briefer though

not in a less comprehensive manner. Method is not the only advantage of the volume, for much new material, the result of discoveries and research is incorporated and new light is thrown upon Jewish life during several epochs, especially the Gaonic, in the two main centers of Palestine and Babylonia. Valuable is also the extensive treatment given to the political conditions of the Jews in Palestine from the third century on. Numerous data are culled from Roman documents, works of historians and legal decrees which were overlooked by his predecessor. The struggle of Judaism with Christianity is treated quite extensively. The attitude of Christian literature and its principal writers, from the Gospels to the works of Eusebius, towards Judaism, their attacks against it as well as the defense of their doctrines are stated in considerable detail. The social, economic, and cultural states of the Jews in Palestine and Babylonia are described in a clear though concise manner. All these are of great historical import, but regrettably much of this important material is given at the expense of the inner intellectual and spiritual activity of the Jews during the times, which found expression in the extensive Talmudic and Gaonic literatures. Even if we grant that "thought" is not the essential feature of the national Jewish life in exile as Zunz believed, and that literature does not take the place of the life group as a whole, one cannot justify a historian who devoted to the apologetic works of Justin Martyr, Celsius, Origen, and Tertullian seven pages and to the characterization of the Mishnah and its redaction only a little more than a page. Similar excessive brevity in regard to subjects of the highest importance abounds. The historical evaluation of the Talmud is done in three pages and a similar space is devoted to the entire intellectual activity of the Geonim both as commentators and codifiers. The portraits of the leading Talmudists, both *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*, with the exception of a very few are drawn in sparse lines, and the Geonim, save Saadia, fare even worse. To the credit of Dubnow be it said that he hardly omits an important fact and that he knows the value of concentration. Still, the undue brevity in regard to the principal Jewish literary movements is entirely out of proportion to the comparative detailed description of Christian polemics.

The four volumes, from the fourth to the eighth, represent the best part of the History. They are divided as follows. Volume four is devoted to the history of the Jews in Europe to the end of the Crusades (1200); Volume five embraces the period of the later Middle Ages to

the end of the fifteenth century; Volume six deals with the history of the first century and a half of the so-called Modern Period in general life, and Volume seven completes the account to the year 1789. These volumes are distinguished by three important features, the method of arrangement of material, use of new material, and widening of the scope of Jewish history to include such settlements which were hitherto little known.

The method adopted by our historian to combine both time and space in the narration of events, namely to treat each Jewish center separately within a definite compass of time and group all events in a well organized manner certainly does away with the confusion created by the method of Graetz which surveys the Jewish situation in many countries in one chapter. Likewise, the emphasis on the group rather than on outstanding individuals as the former did conduces to a better understanding of Jewish history.

The new material incorporated is of exceptional value and frequently changes the entire view of the period. The last fifty years were years of great activity in historical science both by Jewish and non-Jewish scholars. Numerous inscriptions which throw light on the early period of Jewish settlements in Europe, such as those in Italy, Byzantium, Spain, and Gaul, and the Crimea were discovered. Many monographs on the history of certain countries and cities were written by savants; documents from hitherto unexplored archives which supply new data on the history of the Jews in Mediaeval times were explored; and treatises dealing with special phases of Jewish life, such as the social, economic and cultural were composed. All this material drawn from various sources were utilized by our author. Especially important is the material which he himself and other Russian scholars, Jews and non-Jews, have gathered. This material which widens the scope of Jewish history and sheds light upon the history of the Jews in Crimea, southern provinces of Russia, and Mediaeval Russia proper was hardly known to Graetz. Similarly, the important chapters on Jewish history in Poland which the earlier historians only sketched in a disconnected manner are reconstructed by our author in a masterly way.

The shortcomings noticed in the earlier volumes are evident also in these. The literary activity and the inner cultural process are, of course, described but in an exceedingly meager manner. Even granting the author's point of view, that the group as a whole and the various aspects of its life are primarily the subject of the historiographer, one

cannot excuse our author for devoting only a page and a half to the study of the Talmud in Spain during two centuries (1000-1200). However, we are compensated for the deficiencies by the qualities referred to above and many more valuable features by which the volumes are distinguished.

The last three volumes which deal with the periods 1789-1815, 1815-1881, and 1881-1914 respectively, are a distinct contribution to Jewish historiography, for the greater part of the time covered was not even touched upon by the predecessors. Graetz, as is known, carried the story only to the year 1848, and even the story of the sixty years dealt with by him was limited mainly to Germany, for with the exception of a chapter on the French Revolution and the emancipation of the Jews in that and the neighboring countries, there are only slight references to the Jews in other countries. The great Jewish center in the Russian Empire hardly existed for him. Dubnow's volumes constitute, therefore, an original work for which the material was almost wholly gathered by the author and constructed by him into an imposing edifice. In this period the content of which is mainly secular, our historian found himself at his best. It is fully comprehensive, for there is not a single country left out; even the new settlement in the United States, which in its more important aspect is only of recent origin, is allotted sufficient space and a succinct but fair account of the leading events of its history as well as of the new type of life, is given. Nor are the other new Jewish settlements in South America, Canada, and South Africa left out. Special attention is given to the history of the Jews of Russia. All the aspects of the life of that great Jewry, political, cultural, social, economic, and literary are delineated in detail, in fact, in excessive detail. The last feature constitutes in a way a deficiency, which is, however, more than compensated by the many excellent features which included also a fine account of the various movements in Judaism, such as Zionism and its theories, and the Jewish labor movement in its divisions and theoretical controversies.

From all that was said it can be seen that the *Weltgeschichte* of Simon Dubnow constitutes one of the most important historiographical works of the period. Its excellencies are numerous, while its deficiencies can be easily supplemented by the histories of Graetz and Yawetz.

ii. In addition to his *Weltgeschichte*, Dubnow wrote two more works on Jewish history, *The History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, in three volumes, and *Toldot ha-Hassidut* (The History of Hassidism)

in which a complete history of the rise of this important religious movement is given. The first was written in Russian, specially for the Jewish Publication Society, and was translated from the manuscript into English by the late Israel Friedlander and published during the years 1916-1920. Much of the material of this work was included in the *Weltgeschichte*, especially the history of Russian Jewry from the beginning of the 19th century to the World War. Judging it on its own merits we can say that it is complete and comprehensive. Two fair-sized chapters are devoted to the early settlement of the Jews in Southern Russia and in Poland in which material hitherto little known is utilized and from which we learn that Jewish settlements on the Crimean shores of the Black Sea were already established in the first century of the Common Era and from which we also gain much knowledge of the Khazars and their kingdom. The history of the Polish Jews during the four centuries, from the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth, are delineated in full in all its aspects, with special emphasis on the inner life, both in its spiritual and social phases. Two hundred pages are devoted to this task. But with still greater detail does the author deal with the history of the Jews of the Russian Empire from 1825 to 1914. More than six hundred pages are devoted to this span of time which covers less than a century. All Jewish movements of importance, such as Hassidism in its later stage, Haskalah, nationalism, and Zionism, as well as their reflection in literature, are described and objectively evaluated, while special attention is given to the political and economic phases. As a result, this work, though containing little new material which is not found in his general History, is yet of value inasmuch as it brings together many data and views, which are otherwise scattered, into one place and affords the reader a comprehensive view of the history of one of the leading Jewries of Israel.

iii. Of a different calibre and of special value is the second work. It is the first complete history of Hassidism in which its rise, development, spread, and struggles with its opponents are told in a detailed and objective manner. It truly excels the monographs on Hassidism written by Kahana, Zeitlin, and Horodetzki who dealt in their works with the theories, views, and phases of the development and spread of this movement, for these are either circumscribed in their scope or are written in a subjective way. The work is divided into three parts, the first dealing with the period of growth of Hassidism from 1740-1782; the second with its spread from 1782 to 1815; and the third with

the sources. Our historian opens the first part by attempting to evaluate the place of intensive piety (Ḥassidut) in Jewish history. He, as a follower of a philosophy of Jewish history which views the whole complex of religious laws only as a means for the preservation of the Jewish people, considers every outburst of deep piety at various times as a struggle of individual religiosity against the leveling influence of standardized group-religion with its cut and dried form. Ḥassidism, therefore, arose according to him, as the result of such strivings. This view which is a modified and moderate version of the current view held by the modern admirers of Ḥassidism who see in it a revival of the Jewish religious spirit, contains only a part of the truth but not the whole of it. We have already pointed out in the preceding volume (Vol. III, Sec. 5) that this movement was primarily one of adjustment of Judaism to certain conditions which existed in the middle of the eighteenth century in the southern province of Poland, and, furthermore, that it created no new values in Judaism but only deepened and popularized some old ones.

After stating his point of view, the author proceeds to give in a few chapters the historical background of Ḥassidism, dwelling mainly upon the social and cultural conditions of Polish Jewry in the eighteenth century. These chapters give a comprehensive conception of the situation and help us to understand the origin of the movement. The biography of the *Besht* which follows steers clear of the excessive enthusiasm evinced by other biographers belonging to the school of neo-Ḥassidism, and while succinct, gives a fair account of his life. It lacks, though, a more psychological insight into the character of the *Besht* and fails to elicit the traits which enabled him to become the founder of a movement. Dubnow delineates in detail the development of Ḥassidism by the disciples of the *Besht*, and also gives succinct accounts of the views of the *Besht*, of his leading disciple, the Great Maggid, Baer of Mezherich, and of Sheneor Zalman of Ladi, as well as of the lesser lights of the movement. These accounts are, on the whole, correct, except that they still cling to the old error of presenting Ḥassidism as a philosophic system and calling their view of God and His relation to the world, a kind of pantheism. No one was farther from pantheism than these religious leaders. As stated by us above (Vol. III, Sec. 5), all that these views mean to convey is a complete manifestation of God in all ways of nature and life, and His all-absorbing Providence, which in reality leaves little room for human freedom. The

second part deals with the spread of Ḥassidism during the years 1782 to 1815. It recounts the biographies of the leading *Zaddikim* and the dynasties they founded, and dwells upon the various countries in which Ḥassidism made its entry. Furthermore, the types and schools of Ḥassidism are differentiated and described and much space is given to the controversies between the new sect and their opponents, the *Mitnagdim*. In this part the historian utilizes much material gathered by himself and incorporates a number of original documents hitherto unknown. The third part discusses the various sources for the history of the movement, both printed and in manuscript.

The book, as a whole, represents an authentic documented history of an important movement, written in a sane, rational and objective manner.

103. PARTIAL AND PERIOD HISTORIES

i. The works hitherto discussed embrace in their scope either the entire Jewish history or at least the greater part of it. But many treatises and books of a more limited character were written, inasmuch as they deal only with a certain period of Jewish history or with only an epoch of a large period, or even with a phase of an epoch or period. As such, they present a broader and more penetrating view of the span of time which they encompass than that given in the general histories. Of all the periods, the one of the Second Commonwealth was particularly favored by Jewish scholars during the last half century as a subject of study and investigation and the number of treatises dealing with it is considerable. Among these, there is to be noted first the *Historiyah Yisraelit* by Joseph Klausner. In spite of its title which indicates the intention of the author ultimately to write a complete Jewish history, the four parts which appeared thus far are devoted mainly to the period of the Second Commonwealth. It begins with the Biblical period, but the history of that span of time is covered in less than a hundred pages, while to the history of the subsequent period there are devoted more than two thirds of the first part and the three following parts. It is quite evident that the purpose of the author was to concentrate on the period of the Second Commonwealth and that the narrative of Biblical times was intended more as an introduction to the main history.

The point of view of the author is very similar to that of Dubnow though it is not as explicitly stated. Like Dubnow, it was his intention

to write the history in as secular a spirit and in as comprehensive a manner as possible, including all phases of Jewish life, the social, economic, political, and spiritual. In fact the author keeps on reminding us in each of his prefaces that he lays great emphasis on the economic phase of Jewish history, and he likewise stresses his scientific method and presentation.

The treatment of the epoch of the First Commonwealth is very similar to that of Dubnow, as it is presented from the critical point of view, but with great moderation. There is an evident desire to keep as close to tradition as possible. The Exodus is explained as a revolt of the Hebrew tribes during a period of decline in Egypt, and Moses is taken as a historical personality, but his activity is entirely glossed over. The Torah is, of course, a gradual development, but like Dubnow, he assumes that Deuteronomy was only discovered in the time of Josiah while the larger part of it was written earlier by anonymous writers. Similarly, much of Leviticus was written early, and only the publication of the Torah and its acceptance by the people at large are to be ascribed to the activity of Ezra. He is thus much closer to tradition than the former historian. As a scientific historian, he finds it necessary to explain the rise of monotheism among the Jews and he finds the reason for it, like Renan and others, in their desert environment. He is conscious, though, of the fact that other Semitic nations also dwelt in the desert and attempts to solve the difficulty by saying that the other nations entered upon a settled life earlier than the Hebrews and hence their polytheism. He apparently overlooks the fact that the Arabs dwelt in the desert millennia after the Jews left it and yet had no notion of monotheism.

The distinguishing feature of our author's treatment of the earlier period of Jewish history is the comparatively large space devoted by him to the prophets. Each of the great prophets is characterized fully and his teachings analyzed and summarized. The phenomenon of prophecy itself is, however, explained in a one-sided manner. Patriotism and ethics are given as its chief constituents, while the element of intense religiosity or God intoxication is completely overlooked.

With the period of the Second Commonwealth his task really begins. Here he becomes detailed and devotes considerable space to the other phases of life besides the political, especially the literary. His main purpose to demonstrate that the period was not merely a period of legal and purely religious activity but a many-sided one, becomes evident.

He therefore, like Dubnow, dwells little on the activity of the *Soferim* and the development of the Oral Law, though in a larger measure than the former, while he is very detailed in the description of all the other phases, political, social, literary, and to a degree, even economic. Literature is our historian's fort  . Each of the parts contains more than a third of literary history. We have thus a detailed discussion of the books of the Hagiographa, Job, Psalms, Canticles, Daniel, and Ecclesiastes. He is liberal in his views; he assigns part of Psalms to the Hasmonean period, and Canticles and Ecclesiastes to the early Hellenistic period. He differs with Graetz who assigns the last work to the time of Herod, but expresses a peculiar view as to its author. He claims it to have been the work of Hyrcanus, the son of Joseph ben Tubia who played an important role in the political situation in the last three decades of the third century B.C.E. The reasons for such assertion are hardly convincing. Again, the three subsequent parts, each of which is devoted to brief epochs of the Second Commonwealth—the second covers from 168 to 37 B.C.E.; the third from 37 B.C.E. to 44 C.E.; and the fourth from 44 C.E. to 72 C.E.—contain long sections discussing content and dates of various Apocryphal and Apocalyptic books. Similarly, the author who made a special study of the rise of Christianity and its founder (see below) gives ample space to this movement and its early development. All these are features which distinguish this history from other similar works. Another feature is the attention devoted to the economic phase of Jewish life of the period. The shorter surveys of the economic situation under the reign of several of the Maccabean rulers and the more complete statement about the state of agriculture, industry, and commerce in times of Herod are genuine efforts to deal with this situation in the history of that period. Interesting is also the attempt to correlate the economic factor with the political and military activities of the Hasmonean rulers as well as with the policy of Herod.

The tendency of the author to emphasize the many-sided Jewish life during the period as well as the original contribution of the Jewish people gives the entire work an apologetic color. Klausner writes with an eye to the historical works of non-Jewish scholars which, on the whole, minimize the role of the Jew in that important time of world history. This tendency is a praiseworthy one and conduces to the correction of many inveterate errors. Thus he rightly minimizes the influence of Zoroastrianism on the Jewish conceptions of immortality and

resurrection as well as on certain phases of religious precepts. Again, he rejects the view of non-Jewish historians that the Hellenist party were idealists, and defends the Maccabbean prince, Jonathan, against the views of Wellhausen and Renan who describe him as a political opportunist to whom the aim sanctified the means, and he pictures him as an ardent patriot and diplomat imbued with a sense of justice. Furthermore, he argues and with justice, against Mommsen who assigns only a single cause for the rebellion of the Jew against the Romans, namely, religious separatism and fanaticism, and proves convincingly that there were a series of causes, political, economic, and spiritual.

Our historian assigns greater importance to the spiritual phase of Jewish life during the period and recognizes correctly that the controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees was not entirely of a political nature, but that its religious phase was as important. For the same reason he devotes more space than Dubnow to the characterization of the great religious leaders of the time, of which that of Hillel forms one of the best essays written on this great personality, though emphasis is laid mainly on the ethical and national aspects of his teachings.

From all that has been said it is evident that in Klausner's work we have a valuable contribution to Jewish history, for it presents the story of an important period in a more detailed and comprehensive manner than the other historians. Yet it is far from complete for he committed the same error as Dubnow in neglecting the religious activity during the times. Rebelling against Graetz who devoted much space to the development of the Oral Law and claiming that Jewish history is not a history of Jewish literature, he committed a similar mistake and chronicled too extensively the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature which, on the whole represents only a secondary expression of the Jewish spirit. A complete history of that period which will present in harmonious manner and in the proper proportion the multifarious phases of Jewish life and give to the religious-legal aspect its due, is still to be written.

Klausner has also written two smaller works on the period of the Second Commonwealth, *be-Yemé Bait Sheni* (In the Days of the Second Temple), published in 1923, and *ha-Bait ha-Shéni bi-Gduloto* (The Second Temple Period in its Days of Glory), published in 1930. But in spite of the statement of the author in the preface to the second work that he only reprinted the three essays from the earlier book and

does not refer at all to the History, it contains little new, for the larger part of the work consists of chapters of the history reprinted verbatim. The two short essays on the language of the Mishnah and on the arts in the time of the Hasmoneans are of little significance, for both subjects are treated in contemporary works in Hebrew and several European languages by Jewish and non-Jewish scholars more extensively and thoroughly.

The case is entirely different in regard to a third work which is closely connected with the period, as it is primarily a biography of the founder of Christianity, entitled *Yeshu ha-Nozri* (Jesus of Nazareth). The work so far is the only comprehensive treatise on Jesus and the rise of Christianity, in Hebrew. However, on account of its bulk, the mass of data it contains, and the erudition displayed in its pages, it would have taken an important position in the historical literature written in any language. In fact, it was translated into several European languages, among them into English by Canon Danby.

It is divided into eight books, the first two of which deal with the literature and the historical background of the rise of Christianity respectively, and the rest with the biography and the teachings of Jesus. To the last subject only one book, the eighth, is devoted, but much of it is presented also in the detailed narrative of his life.

Lack of space prevents us from giving even a survey of the content and we can point out only a few of the general features. The first book is of great value inasmuch as it gives a comprehensive account of the entire literature including Talmudic references, the Gospels, Greek and Roman sources, Apocalyptic Gospels, and all important works on the subject written in the nineteenth century, both by non-Jews and Jews. The last phase was little touched upon by earlier writers, while our author gives a summary of the works written by Jewish scholars on Christianity and its founder from the book of Salvador published in 1838 to that of Enelow in 1920. The second book dealing with the environment of Jesus contains in reality several chapters from Klausner's History of which the chapter on the economic life is reprinted verbatim. These chapters purport to demonstrate the influence of the environment which made the Messianic idea dominant in the mind of that stratum of the Jewish people in Galilee to which Jesus belonged. This is, to a large degree, carried out, but much of the material could be left out without impairing the main purpose.

The detailed biography is presented, on the whole, in a sane and

rational spirit and from a Jewish point of view, which is both critical of the Gospel sources and at the same time objective. The author endeavors to disentangle the kernel of truth about the personality of Jesus from the mass of legends, unhistorical statements, and favorably prejudiced judgments and he succeeded to a certain degree. He does not minimize the character and strength of the personality of Jesus but he also emphasizes the human weaknesses in his character. He denies him great learning and points out the elements of antagonism to Judaism and to the national existence of the Jews which were enfolded in his teachings, though they had many points of contact with current notions held even by the Pharisees. Yet, the work of Klausner aroused much antagonism in traditional Jewish circles at the time of its appearance and with justice. The reason for it is the carelessness of his method due to his psychology which often leads to misunderstanding. Klausner suffers from an inharmonious dualism. He is a strong Jewish nationalist but simultaneously he is anxious to demonstrate his love of humanism, and in all his work there is often an unconscious note of apology which is expressed in an excessive desire to display the humanism of Judaism. He is quite aware of the value of practical observance of religious precepts, but in the work he stresses the ethical teachings of the founder of Christianity and unconsciously minimizes the value of practical Judaism. He also knows that there are parallels to all the sayings of Jesus in the Talmud, still he speaks of the exaltedness of his ethical teaching above the one embodied in the Talmud and Midrash for the reason that it is not connected with *Halakah* and law, failing to see that there is as much ethics in the *Halakah* as in the sayings of the founder of Christianity. He is fully cognizant of the danger of this concentration upon ethics alone, especially of its antagonism to the national existence and to organized social life, yet he says in his concluding paragraph that the ethics of Jesus possesses an original quality not paralleled by the ethical teachings of Judaism, without explaining the nature of this quality. It is these and similar expressions, most likely penned in moments of enthusiasm for "humanism," which gave offence to loyal religious Jews who condemned the book as a whole without taking in consideration the good qualities.

ii. Other scholars devoted treatises to the elucidation of several phases of this important period. The first is Adolph Büchler (1867-1939) who in his book the *Tobiaden und die Oniaden* sheds much

light on a short but eventful epoch in Jewish history, namely the span of time from 220-160 B.C.E. It is during these sixty years that the Hellenist movement began to spread in Palestine, grew to extensive proportions and brought about the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes and finally the revolt of the Maccabees. The principal actors in this pre-Maccabean drama were men of the families of Tobias and of Onias. The representatives of the former were the leading Hellenists while that of the latter, with the exception of one, were traditional high priests. The sources for the events in this epoch are the history of Josephus and the Books of the Maccabees. The first is very meager, and the other two, while more extensive, do not agree with each other and both contradict Josephus. Nor is Josephus always in agreement with himself. As a result historians found great difficulty in disentangling the real facts from the confusing sources. Büchler devotes half of his book to the solution of the numerous problems which the course of events presents. One of the most perplexing difficulties is the statement of II Maccabees, II, 4 that the Hellenist, Simon, the opponent of the High Priest, Onias III, was of the tribe of Benjamin, and yet he calls him the warden of the Temple or supervisor of the priests. Furthermore, the Hellenist High Priest, Menelaus, is said to have been the brother of this Simon and consequently also a layman. That laymen could hold the two leading offices in the Temple before the desecration of the sanctuary by Antiochus took place, is an impossibility, for a layman could not even enter the holier parts of the Temple and the people would not have permitted such sacrilege. But Menelaus and Simon held office several years, and no revolution broke out on that account. Various solutions were offered for this difficulty. Büchler makes an ingenious suggestion. He argues that neither Simon nor Menelaus, nor even the Hellenist Jason who was a priest held the offices they are said to have held, or had anything to do with the sacrifices. The title "High Priest" given to them in Greek sources refers only to their political office, since the high priest was both a political and religious leader. When the strife of the Hellenists began, the political office was separated from the priestly, but the person who held the secular office also bore the title "High Priest." It was thus that Simon, Menelaus, and Jason are named by the sources high priests, though they actually did not worship in the Temple. The suggestion, though ingenious and though it helps us to understand the patience of the people at seeing extreme Hellenists filling the most sacred office,

is not accepted by most historians who solve the difficulty otherwise. More painstaking is his interpretation of the strife between the Tobias and the Oniases as having arisen not only from religious grounds but also from political reasons, making the former loyal to the Seleucid kings of Syria while the latter were still friendly to Ptolemaic kings of Egypt, the former rulers of Palestine. The whole course of events during the sixty years is treated with great erudition and keen historical penetration. The other part of the book is devoted both to the situation of the Jews in Egypt at this time, touching especially on the founding of the Temple in that country by Onias the Fourth, and to a discussion of the sources from which the writers of I and II Maccabees drew their data. The work is thus a contribution to Jewish history and to the study of Hellenistic Jewish literature.

iii. The second historian is A. Tzerikower (1895) who, in his treatise, *ha-Yehudim we-ha-Yewanim bi-Tekufah ha-Hellenistit* (The Jews and the Greeks in the Hellenistic Period), surveys Jewish history from the conquest of the East by Alexander to that of Pompey, that is from 333 to 64 B.C.E. Tzerikower's work differs from that of Büchler not only in scope but in quality. The latter limits himself partly to the political events of the time he deals with and partly to the historical sources, while the former has for his purpose mainly the elucidation of the mutual relations between the two great nations of antiquity whose meeting influenced the history of humanity.

The work is divided into three parts or books. The first is devoted to a delineation of the role played by the Greeks in the East with special attention to the Hellenistic kingdoms and the Greek free cities. The second deals with Jewish history in Palestine from Alexander to the end of the Hasmonean period, in which emphasis is laid on the activities of the Hellenistic party and the events preceding the revolt of the Maccabees; and the third surveys the Jewish Hellenistic Diaspora in its several phases—political, social, and economic. Tzerikower who is both a classical and Jewish scholar treats his subject in a broad manner and with keen historical insight. The first part is really an introduction to the other two and helps us to better understand the leading forces which influenced the course of events during the period. The author utilized to its full extent the extensive historical material which had accumulated during a century of study devoted to this period both by non-Jewish and Jewish scholars, for there is hardly a period of Jewish history which was so much written

about by non-Jewish historians as this one. Furthermore, he drew upon recent discoveries and papyri for data which were unknown to earlier writers. As a result, the whole history is presented to us in a new light. Like Büchler, he injects the political factor into the conflict between the Hellenistic and the traditional parties in the pre-Maccabean epoch, and also stresses the social and economic factors and documents his assertions copiously. Similarly, he elucidates the activities of the Hasmoneans from the political and economic angles and proves that the rebellion of the Jews against Syro-Greeks was not only a result of religious and cultural oppression, but had the aspect of a nation fighting for its very existence against other elements who settled in its ancestral country and wanted to stifle it not only politically but economically. Valuable are his criticisms and refutations of the views of non-Jewish historians of the period, the best of whom could not free themselves from prejudices and minimized the achievements of the Maccabean princes. As a result of all these features, the conflicts, struggles, and achievements of the Jews during the time are divested of their narrow theological garb in which they were dressed by most historians, but are viewed objectively as a many-sided drama of great historical import.

The survey of the Jewish Diaspora is well written and gives a comprehensive view of the political, social, and economic states of the main centers. Of special interest are the historian's remarks about the rise of anti-Semitism in antiquity. With skill and sound arguments he refutes the views of many non-Jewish scholars who attribute the dislike of the Jews to their sharpness in commerce, or their tax farming, or their antipathetical character, and suggests that it was mainly due to a political cause, namely the autonomy granted to them by the kings. The Greek free cities resented this autonomy which encroached upon their power. This resentment gave rise to numerous prejudices and erroneous views about the Jews which in time became themselves causes for animosity. This theory is plausible, but is insufficient to explain the phenomenon. The author neglected to take into account the cultural antagonism between the two nations. The work as a whole is an important addition to Jewish historical literature.

iv. The modern period in Jewish history also formed a subject of interest to Jewish historians and several valuable works were written in this field. The first is *Die neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* in two volumes by Martin Philippson (1846-1916), published in the

years 1907-1911. The first volume surveys the history of the Jews of the world from the French Revolution to the year 1875, while the second completes the story from that year to the year 1905. The author, who was a son of Ludwig Philippson (Vol. III, Sec. 98), the distinguished leader of the Reform movement in Germany, was a lay historian by profession, and he was imbued with the ideas of his father which stressed religion as the main bond of the scattered Jewries, but at the same time he recognized that there are certain forces apart from religion which unite the Jewish people as an entity, and consequently, as he says in his preface, Jewish history has a distinct unity which separates it from the general history of the nations among whom they reside. The events of the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the rise of Zionism and other factors aroused in him a kind of unconscious nationalism, though openly he opposed it mildly. As a result, his history is written from a fair objective point of view.

However, in spite of the all-inclusive title, it is not a comprehensive history of the entire Jewish people. In fact, the author states in his preface that the first volume is devoted primarily to the history of the Jews of Central and Western Europe, while that of East-European Jewries is surveyed only generally. He promises, however, to devote more space to the Jewries in the second volume, but did not fulfill his promise.

The outstanding features of the first volume are the detailed stories of the struggle for emancipation in Central Europe and that of the Reform movement. He calls the latter a movement of revival and claims that it saved Judaism from extinction in Germany and Austria. Yet, he is not antagonistic and, on the whole, fair to the neo-Orthodox movement and speaks favorably of Samson Raphael Hirsch, and Ezriel Hildesheimer, the leaders of that movement. He deprecates the separatist tendency of the extreme Orthodox of Germany, but sees in the rise of parties and differences of religious opinions a manifestation of healthy life which battles against stagnation.

The valuable phases of the second volume are the extensive analysis of the anti-Semitic movement and its progress in Germany, Austria, and France, and the several chapters dealing with the sociological aspect of Jewish life in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the first, he not only gives the causes of the movement among which he counts the rise of extreme nationalism in Europe, and chronicles in detail the steps and stages of its development, but also gives its effects

upon Jewish life. Writing in 1907 he is not pessimistic, but notes with satisfaction that anti-Semitism aroused Jewish consciousness among the younger generation, and is even ready to overlook the fact that it weakened the Reform movement. His attitude to Zionism is mildly sympathetic. He considers it a dream but one of great charm. He notes, though, its accomplishments in the fields of Jewish literature and culture.

In regard to the sociological aspects of Jewish life, he gives a fine survey of the important changes in that direction, dwelling especially on the rate of natural increase, the settlement of the Jews in cities, the state of commerce, industry, and education among them, their participation in political life and similar matters. A special chapter is devoted to conversion among the Jews. The survey is supported by statistical figures, and, on the whole, the chapters afford a succinct view of social and economic conditions of the Jews of Central and Western Europe, but state little of the situation of the great Russian Jewry.

Our historian is likewise ignorant of the cultural changes in Russian Jewry. He refers to the revival of Hebrew literature, but knows little of the Haskalah movement and mentions only Smolenskin and J. L. Gordon. Of the two, he calls the former the reformer of Hebrew literature and the latter a liberal assimilator. He also speaks of Isaac Hirsch Weiss' *Dor Dor we-Dorshow* (History of Tradition) as written in a spirit of extreme Orthodoxy, all of which goes to show how meager was his knowledge of Hebrew and its literature. The value of the work lies, therefore, entirely in its detailed story of the Jewries of Central and Western Europe for which task the author was fully equipped.

104. HISTORIES OF JEWRIES AND COMMUNITIES

i. Of the number of important books devoted to the histories of Jewries of particular countries there is to be noted the five-volume treatise, *Dibré Yemé Yisrael be-Tugarma* (The History of the Jews in Turkey), by Solomon Rosanes, published in the years 1908-1937. It covers the period of time from 1300 to 1807. In reality it is not a history of the Jews of one country but of many countries, inasmuch as it tells the story of many Jewries which were included in the wide Turkish Empire. As is well known, this Empire from the beginning of the sixteenth century extended its sway in Europe over the entire Balkan Peninsula including the present kingdoms of Greece, Bulgaria,

Rumania, and Yugoslavia, and for two centuries also over a large part of Hungary. In Asia it embraced, besides Asia Minor, also the countries of Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia, and in Africa, Tripoli and Egypt. The author then devotes himself to chronicle in detail the story of the Jewries of Asia, Europe, and Africa for a period of five centuries. During the first hundred and fifty years, however, the number of Jews in the Turkish dominions was not large, and consequently the period is covered briefly. But with the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the number began to grow, both through migration of tens of thousands of Jews from Spain and Portugal and also through the annexation by conquest of countries in which there were old Jewish settlements.

During the two centuries from 1500 to 1700 the Jewries of the Turkish Empire played a leading role in the history of the Jews of the world. It is in European Turkey and in Palestine that the great scholars hailing from Spain and Portugal settled and built up new centers of learning. It is there that mysticism developed and exerted its influence over the Jewries of the world, and finally it is there that the great drama of the false Messianism of Sabbatai Zebi was enacted, an event, the effects of which were felt in the European Jewries for over a century. The detailed discussion of these events enhance the value of the work of Rosanes, for he brings to bear much new material derived from communal archives and from numerous Responsa and other sources upon the history of the various Jewries.

The historian covers all phases of life of these Jewries—political, social, economic, and cultural. He pays special attention to the biographies of the leading scholars in the numerous communities of the Empire, especially those of Constantinople, Salonika, Smyrna, Jerusalem, Safed, Alexandria, and Cairo. He discovered much new biographical material and thus completes the biographies of such men as Joseph Karo, the author of the *Shulḥan Aruk*; Samuel de Modena, Jacob Berab, Levi Ibn Ḥabib, Moses di Trani; the poet, Israel Najara; the Kabbalists, Isaac Luria and Ḥayyim Vital; the statesmen Joseph Nasi, Solomon Ashkenasi, and numerous others of lesser fame. He also gives lists of the literary works of all the scholars he mentions and of the books printed in Turkish printing-houses thus enriching our literary history.

Of special value are the appendices to the first volume which taken together form two important monographs. The first deals with the

elements of the Jewish population in European Turkey during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These elements were native Byzantine, French, Italian, and Hungarian Jews, and the great masses of Spanish-Portuguese immigrants who came there after the Expulsion and who finally assimilated all the lesser elements. The author discusses the customs of the various groups, their liturgies, their proper names, and other social data. He also notes their contribution to the social-cultural phases of the later unified Sephardic Jewry of Turkey. Similarly, he analyzes the elements within the Spanish Portuguese group itself, such as the Castelian, Aragonian, and Catalanian Jews and notes their peculiarities of custom and language. The second monograph discusses the Ladino language, the Spanish dialect spoken by the Jews of the East. He gives lists of the words borrowed from the Hebrew, Turkish, French, Greek, and even German, of the proverbs current in the speech of the people, and notes the phonetic changes and other variations it contains. This monograph is completed by another appendix in volume V in which a survey of the literature in Ladino is given, especially the religious books which form the greater part of the literary output in that language. Interesting is the author's suggestion for the origin of the name *Ladino*. It arose, he says, from the fact that the early Spanish Jews used to call the Latin translation of the Bible *Latino*, and later designated the Spanish translation by the same name. This was in popular parlance changed to Ladino and was ultimately applied to the dialect as a whole.

Likewise are notes I, III, and IV in volume III of great interest. The first contains the ordinances adopted by the communal council of Constantinople in the year 1578 which cover the complete set of regulations for the conduct of the Jews in the social, economic, and religious phases of life; the other two relate the biographies and activities of Jews and Jewesses who exerted influence in the courts of the Sultans and on the course of politics. Curious is the story he tells of Emanuel, a Polish Jew, who bought from the Sultan, Selim the Second, in the year 1591, the throne of Moldavia which was subjected to Turkey. Little is known of that Jewish prince as there is only one reference to the fact. As it seems, though, his rule did not last long. Of interest is also note VII in the same volume dealing with the clothing industry of the Turkish Jews which they developed extensively and the center of which was the city of Salonika. These are only some of the valuable features of this great work, and there are numerous others.

Unfortunately, though, this encyclopaedic treatise lacks proper organization of material and clarity of style. It is written in a modernized Rabbinic Hebrew and is replete with euphuistic phrases and expressions. In addition, it suffers from too much detail and inclusion of numerous legends and stories. In short, it is not a popular book but is nonetheless of great benefit to the student of history.

ii. As a complement to the work of Rosanes which, as said, covers to a large degree the history of the Jews in Greece after the conquest of the country by the Turks, we may consider the treatise by Samuel Krauss (Sec. 94), *Studien zur byzantisch-jüdischen Geschichte* (Studies in Byzantine Jewish History), which deals with the Jews in the Byzantine or Eastern-Roman Empire up to its conquest by the Turks. As its name indicates, the work is not a comprehensive history of the several Jewries which were included in that Empire for a thousand years. Such a history, as the author rightly remarks in his preface, could not have been written at the time of the publication of the book in 1914 on account of the meagerness of data and documents. Krauss, therefore, limited himself to a general survey of several important phases of Jewish life in that Empire during the period extending from 500 to 1453 C.E. The book contains five chapters, the first of which is devoted to a sketch of the political history of the Jews of the Empire. This sketch is divided into two periods, one from the year 500 to 738 when Byzantium lost its eastern provinces to the Arabs, and the other from that year to 1453. In the first period stress is laid primarily upon the history of the Jews in Palestine, including that of the Samaritans, and we are told at length of the revolts of the latter during the time of the Emperors Zeno and Justinian, also of a revolt of the Jews in Antioch in the year 608, and of the role of the Jews during the conquest of Palestine by the Persians in the years 616-628. In the second period, the political vicissitudes of the Jews of the European provinces of the Empire is related. The value of this chapter consists mainly in coordinating many data scattered through Graetz's history and other works into a continuous story and adding data from newly-discovered documents which were unknown to Graetz. Of these, the story of the Messianic movement among the Byzantine Jews during the First Crusade is of special interest.

Chapters two and three deal with the social and economic position of the Jews, the extent and density of the Jewish population in various cities of the Empire, and their communal organization. This survey

includes an analysis of the special laws against the Jews, their relation to the non-Jewish population, and their occupations. In regard to the last we learn that the Jews occupied themselves, to a considerable degree, with agriculture, and to a still larger degree, with various industries, of which the manufacture of silk was the most important.

Chapter four, dealing with the cultural history, does not tell as much of the cultural activity of the Byzantine Jews as of the influence of the Byzantine culture on their life and of its vestiges in Jewish literature. There are many interesting facts in that chapter, but the author, as it often happens with those who are eager to establish a thesis, stretches a point when he endeavors to prove that the famous *Paitan*, Eliezer Kalir (Vol. I, Sec. 120), was a Byzantine and lived in Constantinople thus disagreeing with the accepted opinion which places him in Palestine. The last chapter gives a number of interesting literary items, such as lists of the Byzantine emperors found in Hebrew manuscripts and numerous references to events in the history of that Empire found in the later Midrashim, and allied matters. The studies, as a whole, illuminate a dark corner in Jewish history.

iii. Of the other Eastern Jewries, that of Palestine drew the attention of many scholars who devoted themselves to the investigation of its history, especially in the last twenty years. The history of Palestine from the beginning of the fifth century, the time of the redaction of the Palestinian Talmud, to the sixteenth, when the mass migration of the Spanish exiles into that country took place, was, until recently, almost a blank. Only a few scattered data and some leading events were noted and recorded by earlier historians. The discovery of the *Genizah* in Cairo with its thousands of documents threw a flood of light upon the history of Palestinian Jewry during the early Mediaeval period, particularly the four centuries from the ninth to the thirteenth. This discovery stimulated interest in the field, and as a result new documents were brought to light, itineraries were edited from manuscript and published, the Responsa literature was searched for historical data and facts, and the Patristic and ecclesiastical works, both in Greek and Latin, as well as those of Arabic historians, were scrutinized for the same purpose. Added to this there were the discoveries made by the spade of the archaeologists who for the last twenty years have made strenuous efforts to uncover the vestiges of Jewish life and activity carried on during the centuries. Their efforts were rewarded to a large degree; buried synagogues in various parts of Palestine were

unearthed, numerous inscriptions and epitaphs in Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew were read and deciphered, and all these contained first-hand testimony to Jewish activities in ages gone by. Thus, slowly was the veil of secrecy which covered the history of the Jews in Palestine rolled back and the story of the past began to be revealed to us.

A summary of the results of these numerous studies of many scholars as well as of archaeological findings with additions of his own is given by S. Klein (1886-1940) in his book, *Toldot ha-Yishub ha-Ibri be-Erez Yisrael* (The History of the Jewish Settlements in Palestine). The author limits his history to the period beginning with the extinction of the Patriarchate in 425 C.E. and ending with the rise of the Zionist movement. He further limits himself to the story of the people at large and the changes in their life, touching upon the literary activity only occasionally; nor does he give the biographies of famous men. Within these limits his survey is complete and illuminating. The author is fully equipped for the task for he devoted years to the study of the history of archaeology and the topography of Palestine.

The book is divided into two parts, the first surveying the history of Palestinian Jewry up to the fifteenth century, and the second that of the following centuries. Of special interest are the chapters dealing with the Byzantine period, where much material is drawn from the Patristic writings and inscriptions, and where the Gaonic literature is utilized to the fullest extent. We learn that the Jewish settlements during the centuries were extensive and were spread throughout the land including numerous cities in Transjordan. A number of ruins of synagogues with inscriptions in Greek and Aramaic were found in that part of the country. We further learn that the Jewish settlements were especially large in Galilee, where they lived in many small towns and villages. We are also given important data about their communal organizations. The chapters dealing with the early Arabic period up to the Crusades are valuable, for the material drawn from the *Genizah* and other sources is well organized and presents a fair portrait of the life of the people during five centuries. The subsequent period ending with the fifteenth century is treated, on account of lack of material, more succinctly, but even here there is much that is new, for the available sources, such as the itineraries of Benjamin of Tudela, Petaḥyah of Regensburg, the notes of the poet Ḥarizi, and other itineraries are searched thoroughly and every fact is noted. We are in-

formed that even during these centuries there were Jewish communities in Transjordanian.

The second part, dealing with a period better known and more written about, still has valuable new features, the most important of which is the detailed story of Jewish life during the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries which had hitherto been neglected. In the narrative relating to the events of the last century much is incorporated from memoirs of contemporaries and studies made by natives of Palestine. A fine bibliography, copies of inscriptions and epitaphs discovered up to the time of publication (1935), and facsimiles of the inscriptions enhance the value of the work.

Two other works on Palestine deserve mention. These are *Vier tausendjährige Geschichte Palästinas*, by S. Krauss and *Toldot ha-Yehudim be-Erez Yisrael* (The History of the Jews in Palestine) by S. Rabinowitz. The first is more of a sketch than a history, and the second, though more detailed, is not as authentic and as well documented as the work of Klein.

iv. An important contribution to the history of Moroccan Jewry is J. M. Toledano's work, *Tolddot Yisrael be-Morocco* also called *Ner ha-Ma'arab* (The Light of the West). The history of the Jews of Morocco was but little investigated by earlier historians who recorded mainly the general events, especially those connected with the Jews of the capital, Fez, which, due to the fact that it was the residence of Isaac Al-Fasi and for a time also that of Maimonides and his father, assumed some importance in the eyes of scholars. Toledano, therefore, attempted in his work to present a complete picture of this Jewry from its early days in the time of the Romans to 1840. He adds little to the story of the early days, but becomes detailed from the year 1000 on. On the whole it is a history of persecution and suffering, and to a great extent, of literary activity. The author gives detailed biographies of generations of Rabbis and scholars and records their works. The record is quite impressive, especially when taking in consideration the almost continuous persecutions, attacks, and discriminations to which this Jewry was subjected through the centuries. It is amazing to note such extensive literary activity in the field of *Halakah* and also in that of sacred poetry under such harrassing conditions.

Toledano collected much original material from manuscripts for the political and spiritual history of that Jewry and his work is of great

benefit to students of history and Jewish literature. Several chapters, though, are of interest even to the general reader inasmuch as they illuminate hitherto unknown phases of the history of Moroccan Jewry. From these we learn that there existed in the south of Morocco, on the border of the Sahara desert, an independent Jewish state under the rule of Jewish Sultans as late as the tenth and eleventh centuries. For a time there was peace between the Jews and the Christians who also lived in that state in large numbers. After a number of years the Christians rebelled and the state was divided between them and the Jews. Ultimately the Christians emigrated and in their place there settled Muslims who began to attack the Jews. The latter defended their country heroically but they were finally conquered in the middle of the twelfth century. The story of this little Jewish State and its desperate struggles are given in only one document, written in Arabic, which was discovered by the author. It is difficult to determine whether all the data are correct, but there is certainly an element of truth in this tradition, even if some of the features are legendary.

v. There are also a number of historical works devoted to the history of Jewries in several European countries. Of these we note first the treatise by F. Baer (1889), *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden im Königreich Arragonien* (Studies in the History of the Jews of Aragon). Baer, an able historian, devoted himself for a number of years to a thorough study of the history of the Jews of Spain from first-hand sources. He produced several important works in this field of which the above is the earliest. The history of the Jews in Spain had engaged the attention of Jewish historians for generations, but until recently stress was laid more on the cultural and literary aspects rather than on the legal, social, and economic phases. It is to these phases that Baer primarily devoted himself.

The studies which are limited to two centuries, from the end of the twelfth to that of the fourteenth, give a comprehensive survey of the legal, social, and economic aspects of Jewish life in the kingdom of Aragon including Catalonia and Valencia during that period. The first section contains a general sketch of the legal status of the Jews as a distinct element in the body politic, in which the attitudes of the kings, city governments, and the Church towards them are discussed and analyzed. The next section is devoted to the private rights of the Jews in which their privileges, the restrictions imposed upon them, and their relation to the Christians are described. This is followed by a

section on the organization and management of Jewish communities, in which much light is thrown on the inner social life of the Jews of that country. The last section deals with the economic situation of the Jews. However, it is largely an attempt to gauge that situation from the lists of the annual taxes paid by the various communities to the kings. The author used these data to determine the number of Jews in each community and their material situation. The conclusions, though, are more in the nature of probabilities than certainties. The chapter dealing with the economic situation proper gives a brief survey of the occupations of the Jews of Aragon.

The studies are based primarily on material culled from state archives, official documents, and also on data drawn from Jewish sources, especially from the large collection of *Responso* by Solomon Ibn Adret and Isaac Barfat (Vol. II, Sec. 67). As a result of the studies we get a wider view of the history of an important part of the great Spanish Jewry. We learn among many other things that, in spite of the persecutions and discriminations, the Jews of Aragon enjoyed many privileges which enabled them to organize their social life in a very orderly manner. Their laws were given partial recognition beside the law of the land, their courts were conducted in a systematic and juristic manner, and there was even an appellate division. Likewise was their communal life well regulated by boards which took charge of both the assessments of taxes and their payments, elected judges, enacted ordinances and defended the rights of the Jews before the government. It is these features which enabled the Spanish Jews not only to survive persecutions and attacks, but even to maintain their social integrity and creative spirit for centuries after the Expulsion.

The second work of Baer in the same field, *Die Juden in christlichen Spanien* (The Jews in Christian Spain), in two bulky volumes, is of greater importance. It is a collection of documents and records copied by the author, during his visits in Spain, from archives in the capitals of the provinces and other leading cities, in cathedrals, and judicial institutions. Much of the material was collected by the author himself, but he also included many documents and records published by others. The first volume is devoted to the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre and the second to Castile.

The work covers the period from the beginning of the ninth to the middle of the fifteenth century. However, the first two centuries are represented by only one document, a letter sent by Charles the Bald

(823-877), King of France and later Emperor of the Romans, through the Jew, Juda, to the people of Barcelona. In the letter he tells them that the trustworthy Juda reported to him of their loyalty for which he sends his thanks. He further informs them that he is sending by the hands of the trusted Juda ten pounds of silver to the Bishop Frodien for the repair of his Church. The letter was written around 876 and proves the importance of the role that some Jews played both in the affairs at court and in the country in general.

From the beginning of the eleventh century the documents and records become numerous. The documents shed light upon many phases of Jewish life in the Spanish Christian kingdoms during four centuries and are of inestimable value to the students of history. Space does not allow us to quote the contents of even a small portion of the material collected and we will, therefore, cite only a few interesting items. First of all we are impressed by the important position Jews held at the courts of the kings and the nobles of Aragon. Many served as their financial managers, and no transaction performed by king or count was legal unless countersigned by them. There are numerous legal documents, such as deeds of land, bills of sale of houses, or gifts executed by kings or leading counts, to which is attached the signatures, in Hebrew, of Sheshet bar Shlomeh, a well known personality in Jewish history and literature and of Yehudah bar Yizhak. There are also a number of contracts written in Hebrew which were placed on an equal footing with Latin legal instruments.

In one document the Count of Barcelona grants four Jews of that city the exclusive right to transport in their boats released captive Moors to their own country. In another, King Pedro the Second acknowledges his debt to a certain Stephen de Marman for a certain sum of money, the large part of which was used for the purpose of supplying Sheshet Benveniste traveling expenses for his journey to the King of Morocco on a diplomatic mission. This Sheshet Benveniste, a grandson of the first Sheshet, was undoubtedly the one to whom Zabara dedicated his *Book of Delight* (Vol. I, Sec. 202).

Many documents and records throw light upon the position and activities of such famous men as Solomon ben Adret, Jonah and Nissim Gerundi, and Hasdai Crescas. The last, who was a famous philosopher, was the representative of the Jewish community of Barcelona and was highly respected at the Court of Juan I of Aragon. The king

turned to him several times in regard to questions of Jewish law involved in important cases, allowed him to excommunicate all Jews who transgressed the law, and consulted him on other matters.

Of special interest are the documents dated after the year 1391, the fatal year in the history of the Jews of Spain. That year wrought havoc in the Jewish communities in Spain, especially in Aragon, and the situation was aggravated by the strenuous efforts on the part of the Inquisition to convert the Jews. This institution was established in Aragon earlier than in Castile. This state of affairs is reflected in various documents. In one, the communal heads of Saragossa commend a certain inquisitor—name not given—to the attention of other communities because of his fairness to Jews and advise them to present him with sums of money to enable him to pursue his studies for a higher theological degree; in another, a similar plea is made by the communal leaders for monetary support to a preacher of Jewish origin who is about to set out on a journey of propaganda to the Moors of Southern Spain. They praise his kindness to the Jews though he sometimes invites them to hear his sermons. Their appeal was, of course, sent by the order of the king. Both letters are written in Hebrew. From another document, written in 1414, the year of the great disputation at Tortosa, we learn that the apostate, Geronimo de Santa Fé, the chief opponent of the Jews at that debate, succeeded, with the help of another preacher in converting all but fifteen families of the Jews of the city of Alcaez. These are only a few of the data of the valuable book which afford us a glimpse into the inner history of Spanish Jewry.

vi. Another country which was made an intensive and extensive subject of study during the period under discussion was Germany or rather the German Empire, as the field included also Austria and several other provinces. The history of almost every part of the Empire was made the subject of investigation by one or another Jewish scholar. The number of historical monographs and studies is too large to enumerate and we will limit ourselves to the more complete histories and treatises. Of these there is to be noted the important work, *Germania Judaica*, begun in 1903 at the initiative of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* but published in 1934. It was intended to be a summary of all the studies in German Jewish history for more than half a century arranged in a series of articles in alphabetical order and dealing with the cities and towns of the Empire

where Jews resided. The original plan divided the work into three volumes, the first to cover the history of the Jews up to the year 1238,⁴ the second to embrace the history from 1238 to 1500, and the third to continue the narrative to 1815, the year of the Congress of Vienna. However, numerous obstacles arose and a part of the first volume was published only in 1917 during the World War. The War and the subsequent events made the completion of the work more difficult, and it was only after an interval of seventeen years that the editors succeeded in completing the first volume.

The volume covers the history of a large number of Jewish communities throughout the German Empire, including Austria and Bohemia, beginning with Aachen and ending with Zulpich, a town near Cologne.

In addition to the articles dealing with the cities and towns, there are longer articles which give general surveys of the past life of the Jews in the leading provinces, such as Bohemia, Lorraine, and others. A general survey of Germany is given in the article, *Deutschland*, prefacing the volume.

The articles written by competent scholars, though compact, are comprehensive and present the history of the communities in all phases, such as the time of settlement, their legal position, the persecutions, communal organization and spiritual life, economic activity, and biographies of leading men. In general, they cover the history of various communities for about four hundred and fifty years, for it is from the beginning of the tenth century that Jewish history becomes authentic, though there are a few references to Jewish settlements in several cities of Germany in Roman times. The important centers, such as Mainz (Mayence), Worms, Speyer, Prag (Prague), and Wien (Vienna) which played leading roles in Jewish history during the Middle Ages, are dealt with in long articles which constitute veritable monographs, that of Mainz alone occupying more than fifty pages. On the whole, there are two outstanding features in these articles, the detailed accounts of suffering and martyrdom and the emphasis placed upon intellectual activity. The article on Mainz contains forty-seven biographies of men famous in Jewish lore, among them Gershom ben Yehudah, the Light of the Exile, Jacob ben Yakar, the teacher of

⁴ That year constitutes a landmark in German Jewish history for then Friedrich the II established the legal status of all Jews of Germany as *Servi Camerae* i.e. servants of the office of the emperor thus extending to them the personal protection of the emperors.

Rashi, Simon ben Isaac and Meshullam ben Kalonymos, prolific religious poets, and others of great authority. The article on Worms includes thirty-five biographies of Tosafists, codifiers, and poets, and similarly numerous biographies of scholars are given in many other articles, for there was hardly a Jewish community in Germany in those days which did not have to its credit at least one great man. The book is thus a comprehensive literary and biographical as well as historical encyclopaedia. Its value is enhanced by a detailed documentation of the data given in the notes appended to each article.

A complete history of German Jewry from early times to 1870 was composed by Adolph Kohut and published in 1898. It was intended for the general reader and is written in a popular manner. It is quite detailed and gives a comprehensive view of the vicissitudes of that important Jewry.

Histories of special provinces were compiled by a number of scholars. The well known Jewish historian, M. Brann (d. 1920), wrote a *Geschichte der Juden in Schlesien*, and G. Bondy and F. Dworsky wrote a joint treatise entitled *Zur Geschichte der Juden in Böhmen, Mähren, und Schlesien*.

vii. A number of monographs on the history of communities of greater or lesser importance in Jewish history were written during the period. The noted among these are: *The History of the Jews in Vienna* by Max Grünwald; *The History of the Jews of Frankfurt* by A. Freiman and G. Kraukauer; and *The History of the Jews in Venice* by Cecil Roth.

The first is a complete and comprehensive history of this important community which played a leading role in the life of West-European Jewry of the nineteenth century, from early times to our own days. The author, who distinguished himself as an historian of Austrian Jewry by his numerous studies in this field, was fully equipped for his task. In addition he divided his work in the proper manner, inasmuch as he devoted only one third of his work to the history of the Jews of Vienna during the Middle Ages and the other two thirds to the Modern Period. There is little that he could add to the story of the earlier period which had already been treated by his predecessors, but he succeeded in giving us a detailed and clear account of the life of the Jewish community of the Austrian capital during the last one hundred and twenty years, and in this lies the value of the book.

The story of the Jews of Vienna during the second half of the last

century is a remarkable testimony to the energy of the Jew who, when not hindered by oppression and discrimination, produces remarkable results. As late as the year 1821 there were only one hundred and ten Jewish families in the Austrian capital—numbering 500 souls. These represented the “tolerated” or privileged Jews who had the right of residence there, and there were undoubtedly several hundred more who lived in the city temporarily. But by the end of the century they numbered 200,000. However, it is not the numerical increase which arouses our admiration but the multifarious activity which made the Jews a leading factor in the development of that great city. There is hardly a field of human endeavor, such as commerce, industry, art, science, medicine, the stage, and the press—Vienna was noted for all of these—in which the Jew did not take a leading role. The very Revolution of 1848 which turned Austria from an absolute into a constitutional monarchy was due in a great measure to the activity of several Jews. The story of the young Jewish physician, Adolph Fischhoff, told in detail in this work is most stirring in its human interest. This young intern in the general hospital, who, on March 13, 1848, was only an insignificant individual in the Hapsburg capital, became in less than two months, on May 27th, the head of the Committee of Security which ruled for several months not only Vienna but a large part of lower Austria. He was later imprisoned but finally freed, and though he lived quietly for three decades after the Revolution, his political advice was sought after by ministers and statesmen.

All these manifold activities of the Jews as well as their participation in the gay life of Viennese society are fully told by Grünwald. Nor does he neglect the inner life of the Jews and devotes considerable space to the communal organization and its institutions. The most valuable feature of the history is the biographical part. There passes before us a gallery of illustrious men, leaders in every field of endeavor, such as Solomon Rothschild, the financier; Goldmark, Kuranda, statesmen and leading journalists; S. J. Bloch, the doughty fighter against anti-Semitism; Saphir, the famous humorist; Sonnenthal, the leading actor of his time; Noah Mannheimer and Adolph Jellinek, spiritual leaders; and a host of others, leaders in medicine, science, and art whose influence extended far beyond Vienna, and finally Theodor Herzl. In the portrayal of the lives of these men the author adds data gained from personal contact. It is to be regretted, though, that some aspects of the inner Jewish life are treated too briefly. Vienna, as a center of the

Haskalah movement is given a few pages; the great Hebrew writer, Perez Smolenskin (Sec. 73), who published the *ha-Shahar* in that city for over twelve years, is referred to in a few lines; and such scholars as I. H. Weiss and M. Friedman are merely mentioned, while much space is given to successful merchants and soldiers who won recognition. Nor is it intelligible why, when the story is carried to the year 1930, the names of M. Güdemann and P. Chajes, the chief Rabbis of Vienna after Jellinek, are entirely left out. Both these men contributed much to Jewish scholarship and to the rise of the community and an impartial historian should not overlook their activity. The book was written in German and was translated into English from manuscript and published by the Jewish Publication Society in this country.

The author of the second work, unlike Grünwald, deals with the political and legal history of the Jews of Frankfort during the period preceding the nineteenth century. He recounts in detail the persecutions and sufferings of the Jews and their continual struggle for the right of residence in the city and for laws which would make their existence tolerable. Considerable space is devoted to the attack on the Talmud by the apostate, Pfefferkorn, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, which brought Johann Reuchlin to its defence, and to the Fettmilch Insurrection in the year 1614. A sketch is also given of the occupation of the Jews and their mode of life in the ghetto which includes a description of the structure of their houses and furniture. The history of the community during the last century is in reality an abridgement of J. Krakauer's German work, *Geschichte der Juden in Frankfurt*, published a few years earlier. Krakauer devoted years to the subject and wrote a number of monographs on its various aspects.

The third work is an attempt to present the history of a very important Italian community in a comparatively complete manner. The author, however, devotes the greater part of his work to the period which terminates with the beginning of the eighteenth century as it was during the two preceding centuries that the Venetian Jewish community reached its zenith of development in all its aspects. Accordingly, the life of the Jews during that span of time is described graphically and in detail. An extensive survey is given of the political conditions, the continual struggle for the right of residence, and the devices and maneuvers employed by the Jews in attaining this aim. Similar accounts are given of the inner life of the Jews, such as the organization of the community, its management, and principal institu-

tions. A specially interesting chapter is the one on life in the ghetto in which the economic, social, and spiritual aspects of the activities of the Jews are portrayed on broad lines. Neither does he neglect the biographical part of the history; the lives of the outstanding persons who resided and acted in Venice, such as the brilliant and eccentric Rabbi Leon de Modena, the scholarly Simone Luzzatto, the poetess Sarah Coppia Shullam, and others, are recounted in more or less detail. Several chapters of the book are devoted to succinct histories of the communities in cities which were under the Venetian government in the days of glory of the Republic, as Verona, Padua, and several cities on the Adriatic coast and in the Greek Archipelago. The work thus presents a view of a comparatively wide area of past Jewish life in Italy. Still, the brevity of the treatment of the history of the Jews of Venice and neighboring communities during the last two centuries is not entirely justified. It is difficult to understand how the author, in sketching even briefly the history of the Jews in Padua, does not refer at all to the life, literary activity, and the controversy centering about the mystic teachings of Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto, the great Italian Jewish poet and Kabbalist of the eighteenth century. Nor does he refer in his detailed story of the Jews of Venice to the role played by the Rabbis of Venice in that controversy. Similarly incomplete is the portrayal of the inner phase of Jewish life, namely the intellectual activity of the Jewish scholars and writers of the city. We miss even a short description of the character of the contributions of such literati as Leon de Modena, Elijah and Joseph Solomon del Medigo, and many others, who enriched Jewish learning.

It is true, as the author claims in his preface, that he gathered much new material from archives and manuscripts, but it is also true that he overlooked much old material, particularly that part contained in Hebrew sources which bears especially on the spiritual, literary, and intellectual aspects.

viii. Of the histories of other important cities in Western Europe there are to be mentioned *Die Juden in Prag*, a collection of essays devoted to the history of that city, edited and published by Samuel Steinherz in 1927; *The History of the Jews in Regensburg* by R. Strauss, which was, like those of Frankfort and Vienna, written in German and then translated into English, and many others. Strauss published previously a book in German on the history of the Jews of Regensburg in the late Middle Ages. The later work covers the com-

plete history of the Regensburg community plus that of Augsburg. It embraces extensive accounts of the economic and spiritual aspects of Jewish life of those communities. In general, all the histories of leading communities of Germany have much in common for all were subjected to the same authority, that of the German Empire, and consequently events and movements which were of a more general nature affected the various communities in similar manner. We therefore find the several respective authors treating the same events in the course of their histories.

The history of the leading Jewish communities in Poland was likewise not overlooked, and among the notable works on this subject there are to be mentioned two by the able historian of Polish Jewry, Meyer Samuel Balaban (1877), *Die Judenstadt Lublin* (The Jewish Community of Lubin) and *Die Geschichte der Juden in Krakau*. Balaban's works are real contributions to Jewish history in Eastern Europe for he brought together much new material gathered both from Polish and Jewish sources. He made extensive use of the Responsa literature for historical purposes.

105. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

During the period under discussion much interest was evinced by scholars in the social and economic phases of Jewish history, and a number of treatises and monographs were written on the subject.

i. Probably the most outstanding book in this field is Jean Juster's *Les Juifs dans l'empire romain* (The Jews in the Roman Empire) which has as a subtitle *Leur condition juridique, économique, et sociale* (Their Legal, Economic, and Social Conditions). The economic phase, though, is treated briefly, while the other two are discussed in detail and in a most comprehensive manner. The work is not only imposing in quantity—the two volumes occupy more than eight hundred pages—but is also distinguished by its quality. The erudition displayed in it is amazing, for the author, a jurist by profession as well as a classical scholar and historian, mastered the entire literature on the various phases of the subject, legal, historical, and theological, and used his material with skill and dexterity.

The treatise covers the period of the Empire from about 200 B.C.E. to the death of Justinian in 565 C.E. It is the reign of Justinian which marks a turning point in the legal status and destiny of the Jews in the Roman Empire, for it was he who incorporated into his code all

the discriminatory laws against them which began to appear from the time Christianity became the state religion, adding some of his own and thus depriving them of a great part of the liberty which they had enjoyed for centuries. Hence, the year of his death was chosen by the author as the terminating point of his study, for it is primarily from the legal point of view that the treatise was written. It is also under the legal aspect that the social conditions of the Jews of the Empire are discussed and analyzed. The legal aspect also conditioned the division of the treatise into two volumes; the first is devoted to a detailed narrative and description of the status of the Jews of the Empire in relation to the various phases of the public law, and the second to the delineation of the position of the Jews under private law, as well as their individual conduct in daily life.

The first volume deals with the social privileges of the Jews, their origin, character, and nature; with the policy of the emperors in regard to the Jewish religion and to the central authoritative body (the Sanhedrin) of the Jews of the Empire which had its seat in Palestine; and with the communal organization of the Jews of the Diaspora and their institutions. Each chapter is a veritable monograph on the subject it embraces, for it covers all phases and aspects. The chapter on the Palestinian center, though concise, as compared with the others, gives a vivid picture of the influence Palestine exercised on the scattered Jewries for centuries after the destruction of the Temple.

The second volume describes the status of the Jews as citizens: their private rights, laws of marriage and divorce, of property, of contracts, of slave holding, of the autonomous jurisdiction of the Jewish courts, of exemptions from certain laws on account of religious scruples, and their status under the criminal law. Chapters are also devoted to the discussion of the names, costumes, and public offices held by Jews and their economic position. In general, each of these phases is treated under two heads, the first dealing with conditions under pagan, and the other, under Christian emperors, for the rise of Christianity as a state religion affected the Jews in all ways and forms of life. To make the picture more complete, the author devotes two sections of his long introduction to the extent of the Diaspora and to the number of Jews in the Empire. Both of these are of great help for the understanding of the importance of the role the Jews played in the Empire. From the tables of the Jewish population prepared by the author we can gauge the extent of Jewish settlements, for there was hardly a city in

that vast domain, which included large parts of the three continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe, where Jews did not dwell. As for their number, it is his estimate that before the revolts of the Jews under Trajan and Hadrian which took place in 116 and 135 C.E. respectively, it was between five and six million. Taking in consideration the fact that the entire population of the Empire was never more than fifty million, we can infer the advantages that accrued to the Jews from their numerical strength and the importance of their position in the Roman domain. Numbers, however, was not the only cause of their strength; there were other factors which brought about that result. These, as well as the manifold aspects of the position of the Jews, are delineated extensively with a view to prove the main thesis of the work. That thesis is a double one; first, that the Jews in the Empire, even centuries after the fall of Jerusalem, constituted a nation and not a religious body, as Mommsen avers, and second, that they were full-fledged citizens during the entire existence of the Empire, even during the Christian period. The concept which reigned in the Middle Ages that the Jews are only tolerated strangers was not a heritage of the Empire, but an innovation brought about by the Church in the new kingdoms which arose on the ruins of that domain (Vol. II. p. 27). Before the middle of the fourth century, says the author, the Jews were always referred to as a nation in the official decrees; and even later when the Church had already exerted its influence upon the promulgation of laws and Judaism was called a cult or a religion, the connotation still possessed an ethnic background. As regards the Jewish status of citizenship, it had survived through the entire existence of the Empire, for, though restrictions of rights and privileges were issued from time to time by zealous Christian Emperors, the status itself was never renounced.

Of great value are the introduction to the first volume and the appendices to the second chapter. The greater part of the introduction gives a description of the literary sources which deal with the Jews in as complete a manner as possible. It embraces in its one hundred and seventy-eight pages all the sources available: Jewish sources in Hebrew and Greek, pagan writings, all the Christian works from the New Testament to those of the fourth century Church fathers, juristic digests, and monuments and inscriptions. Of importance is the section dealing with Christian literature which delineates in detail the anti-Jewish tendency and propagandistic spirit pervading that literature,

including the various liturgies of the ancient Churches of the Orient. The appendices discuss Jews and Judaism in their relation to the Christian liturgy and ritual and they present in an erudite manner the severe struggles of Christianity to emancipate itself from the influence of the mother religion and the numerous devices it employed to transform the principal institutions and rites it borrowed from the former into something entirely different from what they were originally.

The work of Justjuser thus not only elucidates a considerable portion of past Jewish life, but is also a contribution to historical literature and to the history of religion in general.

ii. Another work which devotes itself mainly to the social and economic aspects of Jewish history on a large scale is G. Caro's *Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden* (Social and Economic History of the Jews) in two volumes. It was the intention of the author to trace that history to the end of the nineteenth century, but unfortunately he died before he completed his task, and the work, therefore, ends with the year 1350, thus covering the span of time from the downfall of the Roman Empire to the above date.

That the writing of such a work even for a limited span of time was a daring undertaking goes without saying, for the delineation of the social and economic position of the Jews during eight centuries is beset with difficulties which are not found in a similar history of any other nation. The Jews being a people scattered throughout the world, the history of even a part of their activities must follow them through many lands, and at times to the ends of the habitable world. Furthermore, as a social group whose fortunes are dependent upon others and who do not make history but for whom it is made, the story of their past cannot be told in a continuous and integrated manner, but must be disentangled from thousands of data and facts which form the very woof of the various activities of many other peoples. In short, the social and economic history of the Jews forms a cross section of these aspects of the life of the nations of the world. In addition, this history cannot be told without a delineation of the political, and to a degree, even the religious aspects of past life. It is for this reason that the author had to devote such a large part of his work to the political history of the Jews in the lands of the dispersion, especially in those of Europe, and had to delineate at length the attitude of the Church and the expressions of the will of the kings and princes embodied in edicts and laws which conditioned the economic position of the Jews. As a

result, the economic aspects of their life is not presented to us in a continuous independent narrative, but its data are embodied in the frame of the legal and political vicissitudes of the Jews, during the centuries, in the various countries of their sojourn.

There is, on the whole, an apologetic strain in this work, for the author attempts to disprove the theory, which became current among German economists at the beginning of this century, that the predominance of the Jews in commerce and especially in money transactions is due to a racial trait in their character. He proves quite successfully that up to the eleventh century the Jews in Italy, Spain, France, and even to a degree in Germany, engaged extensively in agriculture and also plied many trades. Furthermore, that the Jews who resided in maritime cities and engaged in trade overseas not only owned ships but often even manned them. It is true that they were very active in the slave trade which consisted in transporting slaves from Slavonic settlements in Eastern and Southeastern Europe to Spain, Byzantium, and the lands of the Caliphate. But the author explains that this activity was due to the fact that the laws of the Church and the kings forbade Jews to own Christian slaves, and consequently, they could not employ them themselves and were forced to turn to this traffic. It was due to these laws that the Jews were forced to give up agriculture on a large scale which was then carried on by slaves and serfs, for they could have neither. Wherever they were allowed, as in Byzantium, Sicily, and Southern Italy, the Jews engaged extensively in trade and manufacture. Thus in Byzantium manufacture of silk was to a very large extent in the hands of the Jews. They were even invited to come to Sicily, in the middle of the twelfth century, for that purpose. In that country they also monopolized the dyeing industry, and numerous Jews were engaged in this work also in Southern Italy and Southern France.

It was only from the time of the Crusades, when discriminatory laws against the Jews became more severe and the Church bent all its efforts upon their oppression, that they were forced more and more into money lending. They were excluded from owning land outside of the cities, prohibited from trading in a large number of commodities, and also prevented from engaging in crafts by the guilds; they, therefore turned to the only occupation open to them.

The author presents his extremely complicated subject in sections, chronologically arranged, each surveying the legal, social, and economic

position in the various countries. Thus he reviews successively the state of the Jews at the end of the ancient period in the newly formed Germanic states of Europe, including Gothic Italy and Visigothic Spain, in the Carolingian Empire, in Arabia, and in the Empire of the Caliphate, in European countries during the Crusades, and in Southern Europe and the Orient during the twelfth century.

The situation of the Jews in the principal countries of Europe, England, France, Germany, and Spain, from the middle of the twelfth to the middle of the fourteenth century, is covered by the author more extensively, as he deals with each one separately. With great care and detailed analysis he portrays the severe struggle for economic existence in this gloomy period of Jewish history and illustrates it with numerous data and facts.

The author collected much material for his story from many sources: legal codes, imperial acts, archives, Church edicts, notarial records, and contemporary chroniclers. The greater part of the material is derived from non-Jewish sources and only a small portion from Jewish writings. To these belong the itineraries of Benjamin of Tudela and Petahyah of Regensburg (Vol. I, Sec. 196). On the basis of the data contained in these works he gives a comprehensive survey of the social and economic position of the Jews in Southern France, Italy, and the countries of the Orient during the twelfth century. Caro was the first to utilize these itineraries for economic data and his comments on them are interesting, but he is not strictly critical. The work, as a whole, constitutes an important step in the study of Jewish economics of the past and serves as an incentive for further investigation in the field.

iii. A third work in this field, which carries the economic history of the Jews to the year 1500, is *Die Wirtschaftsgeschichte fun die Iden* by I. Schiper, written originally in Yiddish but later translated into Hebrew. It is more concentrated than Caro's book and is limited mainly to the economic aspects dealing with the most necessary data of political history. The material is well organized and the number of illustrations from individual cases is reduced to a minimum. It is for this reason that the author was able to delineate the economic situation of the Jews of the world during a whole millennium in about eight hundred pages.

For the period up to 1350 and for those countries covered by Caro, the author utilized to a great extent the material of the former, but he made important additions. These consist in the more extensive use of

Jewish sources, in a more systematic organization of the material, and in the employment of data brought to light after the work of Caro was published.

The contribution of the author consists primarily in that part of his history which is devoted to the last hundred and fifty years of the span of time it covers. It is during this short period that great events in Jewish life took place, the expulsions from Spain and Portugal, the emergence of East-European Jewish settlements into the light of history, besides great changes in the life and economy of the Jews of the older centers. The scope is thus widened by Schiper to include the Jews of Slavonic countries, such as Poland, Bohemia, Silesia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine, as well as those of Hungary and the Balkans.

Schiper further corroborates the thesis of Caro that the Jews were forced into the money-lending business, and that when only possible they continued to engage in agriculture, even in the late Mediaeval period, in many parts of Spain, Sicily, and Poland. Similarly, they continued to pursue industries and crafts in these and other countries when the law did not restrict them. They certainly engaged in commerce, especially in Poland, where in the beginning they formed almost the whole trading element of the population.

Of interest are the author's statistical figures for German and Polish Jewries during the middle of the fifteenth century which he calculates to have been between 25,000 and 56,000—the minimum and the maximum, respectively—for the former, and only 18,000 for the latter; similarly interesting are his statements of the economic factors which contributed to the issuing of the Edict of Expulsion of the Jews from Spain and his hypothesis that there was a current of migration of Khazar Jews to Hungary, Poland, and Bohemia after the destruction of their kingdom. He supports this last theory by the fact that a number of places in these countries bore, during the Middle Ages, names of Khazar origin.

The economic history of the Jews, as delineated by Caro and Schiper, throws light upon the grim struggle for existence which they carried on for centuries. This is especially borne upon us when we reflect that the number of Jews in Germany and Poland was insignificant and that the same was true in other countries. And yet, it was they who supplied a large share of the money needed by rulers and princes. The number of Jews in England at the time of the expulsion in 1290 was between 2500-3000 souls. The share of their contribution to the

royal treasury a year before had amounted to over a million dollars, squeezed out of them by taxation and confiscation. We are also amazed at the role which the small number of Jews played in the history of the nations of Western and Eastern Europe. This demonstrates not only their power of endurance, but also their vitality and energy, for it is the descendants of the Germanic Jews, including those of Poland, who constitute today the greater part of Jewry.

106. CULTURAL HISTORY

There were a number of works written during the period which deal with the cultural history of the Jews in a wide sense, for while some of them are devoted to the portrayal of the inner Jewish life, others treat of movements in Jewry, religious and social. To the first type belong I. Abrahams' *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* and I. Schipper's *Kultur Geschichte fun die Yidden in Poilen in Mittelalter* (The Cultural History of the Jews in the Middle Ages).

Abrahams' work, first published in 1896 and issued posthumously in 1932 in a much enlarged second edition based on the author's own additions in manuscripts, is a comprehensive treatise on past Jewish life in all its phases, cultural, social, and even economic. He, of course, utilized to a great extent the works of Güdemann and Berliner (Vol. III, Sec. 87), and in fact, apologizes in his preface for the frequent use he made of these histories by telling us that he verified the quotations whenever possible. Still, there is much new material in his book, for its scope is wider, as it includes, in addition to the life of the Jewries of France, Germany, and Italy, which were treated by his predecessors, also that of other Jewries, especially that of England. Besides, it deals with various aspects of life in greater detail than Güdemann or Berliner. Our author differs from them also in method. He does not divide his work into sections dealing with each country separately, but arranges his material according to subject and treats Jewish life as a unity, though he was quite conscious that there was great variety in type. He obviates this difficulty by noting the differences in conduct and custom of the various Jewries whenever necessary.

There is, however, a similarity between Abrahams and Güdemann in the point of view or in the central thesis of the works. The former, like the latter, endeavors to demonstrate that the isolation of the Jews during the Middle Ages was far from complete and that in spite of restrictions the Jews and Gentiles constantly exerted a mutual influence

upon each other. He further stresses the point that the uniqueness and uniformity of Jewish life from the sixteenth century on was only the result of external causes, and that modern conditions broke up that life once more into segments differing according to environment, a process which he considers quite natural. He even goes out of his way to denounce Zionism as a movement, "which has no roots in the past and no fruits to offer in the future." True, the statement was written in 1896, but it seems strange that he did not correct it in later years.

However, to the credit of the author be it said, he did not follow his own view and concentrated more on the portrayal of the inner Jewish life than on its relation to and comparison with the general life as Güdemann had done. He thus succeeded in giving us a comprehensive and embracing picture of the variegated life of the Jews during a long period of time, and it is in this that the value of the work and its great usefulness for the readers consists.

The book opens with a chapter on the synagogue as the center of Jewish life in which we learn that it was not only the center of the religious but also of a large part of the secular life. This is followed by another chapter on life in the synagogue describing the form of worship in its several phases. There is little new in the chapter on communal organization except in its attention to details. The chapters on the ghetto and its mode of life, though they have a strong apologetic ring, are of great interest, especially because of the stress laid on the fact that up to the sixteenth century, in spite of prejudice and suspicion, contemporary literature, even that of the Church, displayed respect for the Jewish character; change in attitude began only after hatred had reached its peak in that century.

In the four chapters which deal with the life of the Jewish home (VII-XI), we have a fair portrayal of a number of its aspects. The attitude of the Jew to marriage, the betrothal and wedding ceremonies, the sanctity of married life, the relation of parents and children, the observance of the Sabbath, the various customs relating to the celebration of the holidays, and the hospitality extended by the Jews to strangers, are all described in detail and with illustrations drawn from many sources. It is the illustrations which vivify the description and supply human interest to the picture as in the description of the extent of hospitality practiced by the Jews during the Mediaeval period, we are told that Isaiah Hurwitz (1570-1630), the well known Talmudic scholar and mystic, never had less than eighty persons at his table on

the Sabbath. Taking in consideration that Hurwitz did not belong to the wealthy, we are amazed at the intensity of his love for his fellow-men which filled his soul. In the chapters which follow, Jewish trades and occupations, costumes, dress and fashions, charity, public and private education, amusements in the ghetto, and relations between Jews and Gentiles are delineated in a masterly fashion in detail and with an evident intention to vindicate Jewish life of the past from any possible slur that may be cast upon it. Thus, the author takes great pains to point out that the Jews did not avoid dangerous occupations, that they navigated the seas, took part in expeditions, engaged in mining and in the manufacture of gun-powder, and even cites the case of a famous Jewish pirate who distinguished himself by his daring.

On the whole, the author uses his extensive material profitably and correctly, but his tendency to generalize, his predisposition towards reform in Judaism, and possibly a lack of thorough knowledge of the sources caused many a hasty conclusion, and at times, inaccuracies. Thus he asserts as a fact that throughout the later Middle Ages the sermon was held in little esteem by the Jews. This, however, is true only as far as the German and Polish Jews are concerned, but it does not apply to the Sephardic communities or to the Italian Jews who were great devotees of the sermon. Again he concludes that the practice of coming late to the synagogue was frequent among the Jews from the fact that the *Shulḥan Aruk* prescribes some rules for such occasions. He might as well conclude that theft or cheating in business was frequent among them because the codes contain rules governing such cases. His references, too, are not always accurate, and occasionally the passage states the opposite of what he intended to prove.⁵ Nor is it correct to say that "there intruded itself a notion into Jewish thought that instrumental music is unjewish" referring for the statement to a passage in the Talmud (Gittin, 7a). The passage there merely advises Jews to refrain from excessive hilarity after the destruction of the Temple, and even singing is included in that advice. As the commentators distinctly state, the advice refers only to banquets and gatherings in taverns. That instrumental music was not disparaged by the Jews can be proved by the fact that violin playing was considered almost a necessary accomplishment among the pious Jews of Poland. Equally misleading is the statement, "All-night sitting for prayers and for reading semi-sacred books occurred at stated intervals and mostly

⁵ See p. 31 of the book, note 2, and cf. *Shulḥan Aruk*, *Orah Ḥayyim*, Sec. 151, 6.

twice a year. A large number of Jews rose regularly at midnight to pray." The first evidently refers to customs observed on the first night of Shebuot and on *Hoshunah Rabba*, the seventh day of Succoth, while the second implies the custom of *Tikkun Hazon* i.e. recitation of prayers and poems referring to the restoration of Palestine. But these were the only ones and no others took place "at stated intervals"; furthermore, the Jews did not read semi-sacred books, as the reading consists largely of passages from the Pentateuch. Nor is *Tikkun Hazon* considered prayers in the ordinary meaning of the word. We have pointed out these things to prove that scholars must be careful in their assertions and not mislead readers. We can, however, overlook such inaccuracies for the sake of the value and usefulness of the book.

ii. The work of Schiper on the culture of the Polish Jews is of lesser importance. Not only does it fall short of the title, inasmuch as it deals only with a part of the past life of that Jewry and terminates with the year 1500, but is not comprehensive even for that period. In fact, two sections of the book, dealing with the settlement of the Jews in Poland and the autonomy of the Jewish communities, are reprinted from the author's economic history discussed by us above. Other sections describing the ghetto and communal institutions, and giving biographies of a number of Rabbis, physicians, bankers, and court Jews have value but are too brief. It is only the last three sections which discuss the home, dress, ornaments, names, and the vernacular of the Jews in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which are of special interest. Still, in spite of its brevity, the book enriches our knowledge of Jewish life in Poland during the period stated.

iii. Of the works dealing with the history of movements and sects there are to be noted two treatises on the history of that ancient sect, the Samaritans, distinguished by their opposition to their brethren for 2300 years and by their heroic struggle to maintain their integrity and loyalty to their type of Judaism for the same length of time. One is *The Samaritans* by M. Gaster (1856-1938) and the other *Sefer ha-Shomronim* by I. Ben Zebi (1884).

Gaster's work is not a history of the Samaritans in the proper sense, but is more a survey of their origin, of their religion, and literature. It is divided into three sections or lectures. The first is devoted to their origin and the principal events in their history up to 70 C.E. He favors the view current among modern scholars that the Samaritans are to a great degree descendants of the ten tribes who remained in the land

after the fall of Samaria and the exile of a part of the population. He claims that the settlement of foreign nations by the Assyrian king in the north of Palestine mentioned in II Kings, XVII, 24, and in Ezra IV, 10, really refer to Assyrian garrisons but not to actual colonists. He further seems to give credence to the chroniclers of the sect that it was the Samaritans who had invited Zerubabel and the Jews to join with them in worshipping in the sanctuary on Mount Grizim and not as told in Ezra IV, 1 that the Samaritans offered the Jews assistance in rebuilding the Temple but that the offer was rejected. The view that the Samaritans were of pure Jewish stock leads him to the positing of his main thesis which is that the development of the type of Judaism of the Samaritans went on independently of and was parallel to that of the main body of the Jews, and that it did not borrow from the latter. This is expounded by the author in the second section in which he discusses the Oral Law of the Samaritans, their belief in immortality, resurrection, and the hereafter. All these features, though they show a likeness to the religious development among the Jews during the Second Commonwealth, were, according to Gaster, indigenous to the Samaritans. The likeness is due to the common source of the religion, both of the Jews and the Samaritans—the Torah. Both had to adjust the Torah to contingencies of life under similar conditions, and similar causes produced similar results. He develops his theory in detail and indirectly sheds some light on the nature of the controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. He asserts with Geiger that the latter also had a *Halakah* which was simpler than that of the Pharisees and closely resembled that of the Samaritans. Yet, we must not assume that the Samaritans borrowed from the Sadducees, for their *Halakah* also often resembles in a number of points that of the Pharisees, and this, says Gaster, is proof of its independent character. In general, he is inclined to assume the antiquity of the Oral Law which had developed along parallel lines, both among the Jews and among the Samaritans very early, even centuries before the controversy between the Pharisees and the Sadducees broke out.

Gaster's theory is far from being sound in all its assertions and many of its points are mere hypotheses. Still some of his arguments deserve considerable attention as they have important bearing on phases of Jewish history and religion. Of these the following has special import. In his endeavor to prove the independence of Samaritan Judaism, he avers that the fact that the Samaritans possess the complete Pentateuch

which, with few changes, is the same as that of the Jews, proves the untenability of the critical view that the Pentateuch was the work of the prophets and was finally edited by Ezra. Were that the case, argues Gaster, the Samaritans would not have accepted it, for they rejected all the prophets and considered Ezra their chief enemy. We must, therefore, assume that the Pentateuch was a complete work independent of prophetic activity centuries before Ezra and was the common property of both the Judeans and the Israelites of the North. Whether we agree with this view or not, the problem it raises needs consideration. The last lecture gives a succinct but a comprehensive survey of the literature of the Samaritans.

iv. Ben Zebi's book on the Samaritans is a real history of that sect, inasmuch as it narrates their vicissitudes and struggles during the entire period of their existence up to the present day. Nor does it neglect to survey their religious principles and customs as well as their literature. The account, though, is given in a popular way and in a very succinct manner. This, however, does not detract from its accuracy and correctness, for the author, besides devoting years of study to the subject, had personal contact with the leaders of the sect for twenty-six years and learned much from oral tradition.

The work consists of three parts. The first gives briefly the important events of the history of the sect from early times to our own day. He believes that the majority of Samaritans were pure Israelites, and while he admits of an admixture of foreign settlers, he assumes that these formed a minority which were later completely assimilated by the majority. Unlike Gaster, he assumes that the Jewish teachings exerted great influence upon the religion of the Samaritans, especially upon their beliefs in immortality of the soul, resurrection, and similar dogmas. In relating the struggles of the sect during the Arabic period, he comes to the conclusion that the remarkable diminution of its numbers during that period was due primarily to forced conversions.

The second part is devoted to a detailed survey of the various settlements of the Samaritans in and outside of Palestine during their history. The Palestinian settlements are described at length both from the historical and geographical aspects.

The third part narrates the dogmas subscribed to and the customs practiced by the Samaritans today⁶ and in addition contains a sketch

⁶ Their present number is very small. The census of 1931 states it to be 182 persons, 93 males and 89 females.

of the literature of the sect. Notes and appendices containing several Samaritan inscriptions, a detailed description of a Samaritan Scroll of the Law, several long excerpts from ancient chronicles of the sect, a chronology and a bibliographical list of the books comprising their literature, complete this interesting account.

A number of monographs and works deal with both the various mystical and Messianic movements which preceded the modern period, and with secessions from the standard type of Judaism which took place in Jewry during the two hundred and fifty years from the beginning of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, all of which indirectly called forth the important movement of Ḥassidism. Of these works we note especially *Toldot ha-Mekubalim, ha-Shabtaim, we-ha-Ḥassidim* (The History of the Kabbalists, Sabbatians, and Ḥassidim), by David Kahana (1838-1912), and the *Toldot ha-Tenuah ha-Frankit* (The History of the Frankist Movement), by Meyer Balaban.

v. The first is a collection of essays originally written by the author during the seventies of the last century which were published at the time in Smolenskin's monthly, *ha-Shahar* (Vol. III, Sec. 60), but were revised in the collected edition (1914) and many new data added. It is divided into four books, and each is given a euphuistic Biblical title. The first, called *Eben Negef* (A Stumbling Stone), deals with the history of the mystical movement which had its center in the city of Safed in Palestine during the sixteenth century, its teachings and theories, as well as with the leading mystics of that age.

Special attention is given by the author to the elucidation of the teachings of Isaac Luria known as the *Ari* (Vol. II, Sec. 118), which, as is well known, exerted great influence upon several generations of pious Jews mystically inclined and were an important factor in the creation and development of the Messianic movements and the many other aberrations of later times. The author, as a rationalist, does not view with favor that type of Kabbala and hence the title of the essay. He is especially hard on Ḥayyim Vital, the disciple of Luria, the revealer and exponent of his master's teachings. The essay gives a succinct but a comprehensive view of the leading men of the age, such as Joseph Karo, Moses Cordevero, Jacob Berab, and many others, as well as an account of the controversy about *Semikah* and about the appearance of David Reubeni and Solomon Molko.

The second book, called *Eben ha-Toim* (The Misleading Stone),

is a detailed monograph on the Messianic movement of Sabbatai Zebi. It gives the biographies of Sabbatai Zebi and his principal followers, the propagandists of the movement; chronicles the spread of the movement through various Jewries, its effect and influence; and also gives its teachings and theories. It is still one of the best essays on this great aberration in Israel which shook the Oriental and several European Jewries to their foundations and the effects of which were felt for over a hundred and fifty years.

It is to these very effects that the third essay or book is devoted. It deals with a number of subjects: with the activities of the various propagandists of Sabbatanism in one form or another during the last quarter of the seventeenth and the first of the eighteenth century; with the two great controversies, the one which arose in Italy on account of the activities of the poet and mystic, Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto (Vol. III, Sec. 17), and the other which took place in Germany between Jacob Emden and Jonathan Eibeschütz; with the Frankist movement; and with the rise of Ḥassidism. The last two subjects are treated rather briefly, but the two controversies are chronicled at length. It is the story of the controversies which makes the works valuable, for Kahana was the first to describe them in detail and on the basis of new material, especially the one between Emden and Eibeschütz. It still remains one of the best sources for the history of this strife, inasmuch as he reproduces a number of the amulets written by Eibeschütz which had served as the basis of the accusation that he is a follower of Sabbatianism, and he gives detailed interpretations of their contents. Kahana favors Emden in the controversy, and like Graetz, believes Eibeschütz to have had leanings toward that movement. The fourth essay, *Eben Miluim* (A Set Stone), contains supplements to the first three books.

vi. Balaban's work presents a complete and documented history of the obnoxious and degenerate Messianic movement, that of Jacob Frank and his followers, which took place in the Polish provinces in Eastern Galicia and Podolia in the middle of the eighteenth century.

The history of that movement, which, as known, ended in the conversion of about 1500 Jews to Catholicism, engaged the attention of Jewish and non-Jewish historians. Graetz wrote a book on the subject, and a Polish historian, Alexander Kraushaar, wrote in 1864 a two-volume work on Frank and his sect which was later translated into Hebrew by Naḥum Sokolow. However, Graetz did not utilize all

the sources, and Kraushaar could not appreciate the theological and mystical phases of the movement. Balaban, who devoted to this study many years and wrote a number of essays and articles on the subject, gives in his book a comprehensive account of the movement. The value of the work consists primarily in the many new Hebrew, Latin, and Polish documents used by him. We have in his work a detailed account of the activities of the group from which we learn the depth of moral depravity to which the deluded and misguided mystics sank. Not only did they commit grave offenses, but in their hatred towards their brethren who excommunicated them for their degenerate moral actions, they denounced the Talmud before the Church, demanded that it be burned, and endeavored to justify blood accusations against the Jews. Our author gives, for the first time, a transcription of the minutes of the two disputes which took place between the Frankists and the Jews before the Church dignitaries, in the years 1757 and 1759, in which the arguments of both sides are given. Besides, he throws light on many phases of the movement hitherto unknown, culled, as said, from Jewish and non-Jewish sources. Among these is the correspondence between the papal nuncio in Warsaw and the Vatican regarding the Frankists. From the letters we learn that not only was the Vatican interested in such a mass conversion, but that it also had its suspicion of the motives of the converts. The author also devotes considerable space to the delineation of the antecedents of the Frankist movement and portrays the spiritual state of the Jews in the southern Polish province in considerable detail, touching upon the Sabbatian movements in Poland, the Emden-Eibeschütz controversy, and similar matters, and adding new data which illuminate all the intellectual and spiritual repercussions and currents which had agitated a large part of Jewry during the first half of the eighteenth century.

vii. Of the religious movements and currents which arose during the eighteenth century, that of Ḥassidism found special favor with the writers of the period under discussion. Many monographs on its teachings in general and those of its outstanding leaders from the *Besht* down in particular were written in Hebrew and in several European languages. We, likewise, have a number of biographies of its founder and his leading disciples, as well as collections of Ḥassidic legends and stories, of which those of Berdichewski in Hebrew and of Buber in German, are the best. There are also a number of histories dealing with this movement, its development and spread among the

Jewish masses in the Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, and Galicia. Of these the most notable are Dubnow's *Toldot ha-Hassidut* dealt with by us above, and *ha-Hassidut we-ha-Hassidim* (Hassidism and Hassidim) by S. A. Horodetzki (1871).

The work, in four parts, is not a history in the strict sense of the word, but is really a collection of essays written by the author during more than two decades and published in various periodicals in Hebrew and in German. Yet, in its scope and purpose it aims to give a comprehensive view of the nature of the movement and its successive development. It differs from that of Dubnow not only by the fact that it is not a continuous and organic treatise, but also by its method, character, and attitude of the author towards Hassidism. The latter, as we have seen, is a real history of the movement, narrating in succession its origin, its spread among the people, and its struggles with its opponents. Horodetzki's work deals not with the movement as such, but with the leaders and their teachings, and the various essays are short biographical monographs of a large number of Hassidic teachers from the *Besht* to Israel Friedman of Rizin (d. 1851), the founder of the important Sadygora dynasty of *Zaddikim*. Its purpose is to present the inner history of this religious movement through the biographies of its founders and leaders during a period of over a century. Emphasis is primarily laid upon the doctrines, views, conduct, and attitudes of the *Zaddikim*, who shaped, moulded, and formed the movement during this period, while the external events in the lives of these leading personalities of Hassidism which affected the movement as a whole are treated only briefly.

The first three parts of the work contain, besides an introduction on the various manifestations of mysticism in Judaism up to the rise of Hassidism, essays on the *Besht*; on the Maggid, Baer of Mezherich, his leading disciple and successor; on Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye, the expounder of the teachings of the *Besht*; on Leib Sorés, the miracle man par excellence; on Menaḥem Mendel of Witebsk, disciple of the Maggid, who spread Hassidism first in Lithuania and later transplanted it to Palestine; on Levi Yiṣḥak of Berdichev, famous in story; on Naḥman of Braṣlaw, the lone *Zaddik*, grandson of the *Besht*, who blazed his own path in Hassidism; on Naḥum of Chernobil, Aaron of Karlin, Elimelech of Lyzensk, Israel of Rizin, all founders of dynasties of *Zaddikim*, and a number of lesser lights.

The fourth part contains essays on the *Besht* in popular legend, on

Rabbinism and Hassidism, on Hassidic life, on Palestine and Hassidism, and on the attitude of Hassidism to the Jewish woman, all of which intend to give an evaluation of the movement from various angles and an appreciation of its spiritual content. The work could have been a valuable complement to the more formal history of Dubnow were it not for the spirit of partisanship which pervades it and affects the judgment of the author regarding men, events, doctrines, and teachings.

Horodetzki belongs to the group of writers who see in Hassidism a revolt against the severe legalism of Rabbinism. These picture it as a religious current which, having issued from the depths of the living religion in the heart of the people, had placed itself in opposition to the rigidity and formalism of the Rabbinic Orthodoxy of the time, and thus effected a revival of religious emotion. As a result, they glorify it as the saviour and preserver of genuine piety, democracy, poetic spirit, and joy of life as against the harsh, gloomy, dry, and prosaic type of Judaism which the rationalistic and aristocratic Rabbis, immersed in Talmudic dialectics, had imposed upon the masses at that time. That there is only partial truth in such assertion, and that these champions of Hassidism overlook its grave defects, was pointed out by us in the preceding volume (Sec. 10): Our author, however, is a firm believer in this view of glorification and the entire work was written with this aim in mind.

His partisanship becomes evident in the very first pages of the introduction in which he surveys the progress of mysticism in Judaism, concentrating upon the development of the Kabbala and its struggle against the rationalism of both Jewish philosophy and Rabbinic learning. He waxes eloquent in his exaltation of the former and says, "The Kabbala is the spiritual essence of Judaism, its inner kernel, which supplies it with the spirit of life, nay, it and Judaism are identical."⁷ He does not substantiate his assertions, but merely states them. The chief merit of the Kabbala seems to lie, according to our author, in its opposition to the laws which he finds in a few quotations of the *Zohar* and in the writings of some Kabbalists, but especially in such assertions which speak of the inner meaning of the precepts (*Mizwot*). He forgets, though, that the search for the inner meaning of the laws was the main task of all the rationalists in Jewry from Philo

⁷ *ha-Hassidut we ha-Hassidim*, Introduction, p. xi.

down to the last representative of Jewish Mediaeval philosophy, the supposed "enemies" of the Kabbala. As for the opposition of the Kabbala to Rabbinic learning, he ignores the fact that the leading Kabbalists from Nahmanides to the Gaon of Wilna were also leading Rabbinic scholars, though he is not entirely unaware of it. Space prevents us from following the author in his numerous contradictions, and one statement will suffice. Says our author, "Legal and practical Judaism is hemmed in within the narrow bounds of laws and 'fences'; and its God is also hemmed in, in the 'four ells' of the Halakah. This is the God of Rabbi Akiba who derived numerous laws from every letter and iota of the Torah. He is the God of Maimonides, of Joseph Karo, of Isserlis (Ramaa), and the God of the Gaon of Wilna. It is the Kabbala which supplied Judaism with mystery, poetic feeling, and complete devotion to God."⁸ To accuse Akiba, who rejoiced at his martyrdom for the love of God and who was the teacher of mysticism in Tannaitic times,⁹ as well as Karo, who saw visions of a *Maggid*—i.e. an angel who constantly instructed him in ways of devotion to God—as being devoid of mystic spirit is more than ignorance, and is characteristic of the spirit of the work. It is this spirit of glorification which permeates each and every essay of the work which detracts much from their value. It is due to Horodetzki's desire to exalt Hassidism and its leaders that he reproduces lengthy quotations from the works of the persons described with but little profit. It is also due to this that he portrays his characters by means of numerous legends without commenting upon them nor drawing from them the valuable kernel, if such there be found. It is also due partly to the tendency of glorification and partly to the fact that the essays were written at different times and as separate monographs, that there is interminable repetition in the presentation of the doctrines of various men. Horodetzki is quite aware that the successors of the *Besht* added little to his teachings, and yet the view of each man is given extensively. This is justified in the single essays but not when collected in book form.

The partisanship is strongly evident in his evaluation of Hassidism, especially in his exalting the institution of *Zaddikism*, which entirely ignores its darker aspects. It fostered fanaticism, and its representatives

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *Hagiga* 114a.

did not always practice the virtues which Ḥassidism taught. In fact, the author, in his biographies of the Ḥassidic leaders, affords numerous examples of the grave defects of *Zaddikism*.

However, on the other hand, the large mass of material of Ḥassidic history and life gathered by the author, the detailed presentation of the doctrines of Ḥassidism as taught by its outstanding representatives, the numerous fine legends, and the many interesting biographical data, make the work a contribution to the history of Ḥassidism.

viii. The history of the liberal, cultural, and religious movements of the nineteenth century, such as the movement of enlightenment in its first stage, the Reform movement, and the rise of new Jewish learning, was delineated by the prolific Hebrew writer and savant, Simon Bernfeld (1860-1940), in three monographs, *Dor Tahapukot* (A Perverse Generation), the *Toldot ha-Reformazion ha-Datit be-Yisrael* (The History of Religious Reformation in Israel), and *Dor Ḥakam* (A Wise Generation).

The first is a historical sketch of the early movement of enlightenment and the subsequent intellectual currents in German Jewry. It is divided into two parts, the first covering the period from the middle of the eighteenth century to the death of Mendelssohn, and the second from the year 1786 to the year 1820, which marks the beginning of the Reform movement. The author, after giving an introductory survey of the political, social, and spiritual position of German Jewry in the middle of the eighteenth century, makes Mendelssohn and his circle the center of his study. In the detailed delineation of the life of the philosopher, his personality, and activities, as well as those of his followers, the author really reveals to us the entire vista of the cultural and intellectual state of the upper stratum of German Jewry at the time, for he widens the circle and includes outstanding personalities both men and women of greater or lesser importance. He makes an honest attempt to be objective, but is not always successful. In his view of Mendelssohn he avoids the exaggerated estimate of the *Maskilim*, on the one hand, and the derogatory attitude of Smolenskin, on the other hand, and maintains a fairly balanced opinion. The case is not so with Naphtali Herz Wessely whom he misjudges greatly and whose poetry and learning he undervalues. Similar biased views are held by him regarding other men of this age.

The second part deals primarily with the characterization of such persons as David Friedlander, Solomon Maimon, and the leaders of

the centrifugal movement in the Jewry of the age. It contains also a sketch of the roles of several brilliant women, including Henrietta Herz, Mendelssohn's daughters, and others. On the whole, Bernfeld displays a negative attitude towards the actions of Friedlander and his friends and he condemns their efforts to escape the burden of Judaism.

The second contains the story of the Reform movement from its beginning in the twenties of the last century to 1870, together with characterizations of the moving spirits of the movement as well as its principal opponents. In his desire to describe the causes which called forth the movement, the author repeats a part of the content of the previous work. The presentation of the facts and data of this strife in Jewry is generally correct, but the interpretation is not objective in spite of the author's continual insistence on his impartiality. In reality the writer seems to have no point of view and as a result he sometimes favors the followers of Reform, and at other times, their opponents. There is, though, an unconscious sympathy with the former, which is consciously suppressed but not always successfully. This conflict results in numerous contradictions and retractions of statements. Thus, he retracts his severe judgment of Friedlander pronounced upon him in the earlier work and attempts to depict him in a more favorable light, while he admits that, according to his famous letter to Pastor Teller (Vol. III, Sec. 15), he really had intended to found a new sect of semi-Christians, and that if his plan had been realized, it would have meant the extinction of Judaism and the Jewish people. Again, he calmly states twice that Eliezer Lieberman, the apostle of Reform, who later became a Catholic priest and was close to the Vatican, excelled in the understanding of Judaism more than the orthodox Rabbis of his time, among whom were men of sainted piety and great Talmudic scholars, such as Akiba Eger, Moses Sofer (Vol. III, Sec. 109), and others. A. Geiger is described at one time as "a man who acted with knowledge and wisdom" (p. 120) and at another time as "one bent on the destruction and the undermining of Judasim." Samson Raphael Hirsch, the champion of Orthodoxy, is successively reproached and praised, and once is even justified in his harsh judgment of the reformers. Such examples could be multiplied, but these will suffice to prove both the lack of objectivity and of a point of view.

Dor Hakam is a brief history of the development of the new learning through the biographies of its leading exponents, N. Krochmal, S. Rapoport, L. Zunz, S. D. Luzzatto, Abraham Geiger, and a few

others. The estimates are fair and written with sympathy, but there is much repetition of what was said about the very same men in the *History of the Reformation*. Curiously enough, Z. Frankel is missing from the list of the illustrious savants. Whether the omission was intentional or due to haste, we cannot tell.

ix. Even the youngest movement, the national or the Zionist, found its historians and chroniclers. Numerous essays, pamphlets, and monographs on the various aspects of the movement, covering both its theoretical and practical phases, were written in Hebrew and in almost all European languages. The most important works which aim to present a complete account of the movement as a whole or of an important phase of it are S. Zitron's *Toldot Hibat Zion* (The History of the *Hobebé Zion* Movement), published in 1914, and Sokolow's *History of Zionism*, published in 1923. The first was intended by the author as a complete history of that phase of the national movement which developed in the days preceding Herzlian Zionism, and which engaged mainly in establishing colonies in Palestine. Unfortunately the book was not completed and we have only the first volume which carries the history from the inception of the national ideal to 1890 when the movement was legalized in Russia.

The volume is divided into two parts, the first covering the earlier epoch during which the idea of a return to Palestine was born and was only dimly conceived by selected spirits, both Jews and non-Jews, who hailed primarily from West-European countries, and the second, embracing the decade from 1880 to 1890, when that idea took shape in Russia and expressed itself in the colonization of Palestine. In the first part we have a fine survey of the efforts of Rabbis Z. Kalisher, J. Alkalay, and E. Guttmacher; of the views of Moses Hess, Smolenskin, E. Ben Yehudah, D. Gordon, the early champions of the national ideal; as well as of the activities of C. Netter, the founder of the agricultural school, *Mikweh Yisrael*, and others.

In the second part, the author chronicles, in detail, the painful steps of the movement during the decade mentioned, both in its theoretical and practical aspects. The contributions of Pinsker, Lilienblum, Rabbis Samuel Mohiliver and Isaac Rülff, P. Smolenskin, S. P. Rabinowitz, and many lesser lights are told in detail. Considerable space is also given to the efforts of two noble Englishmen, Edward Cazelet and Lawrence Oliphant, the indefatigable champion of the return of the Jews to Palestine. The reflection of the national ideal

in contemporary periodical literature is described extensively, and the spread of the movement as well as the various steps of organization, such as the first general conference at Kattowiz in the year 1884 and successive meetings are related at length, and finally the establishment of the colonies are chronicled with all attending circumstances. As a result, we have before us a highly dramatic history, though told in a prosaic and terse style, of the struggles of a great ideal for expression in life and realization in action during several decades. The history possesses deep human interest and calls forth reverence for those men of spirit whose dreams and modest activities made possible the establishment of the present Jewish center in Palestine.

x. Nahum Sokolow's two-volume *History of Zionism*, published in 1919, is a notable contribution to the history of the national movement. It is distinguished not only by its quantity but also by a number of qualities, chief of which is the wealth of material and data brought together from numerous sources by the master hand of Sokolow. Of the work as a whole it can be said that it displays, more than any other book of this prolific writer, his versatility, embracive grasp of ideas and social conditions, and his encyclopaedic knowledge, and simultaneously, his shortcomings and limitations, which were noted by us above.

The content of the book is neither exhausted by the title, for it exceeds the bounds of the story of a particular movement inasmuch as it contains extraneous material, nor, on the other hand, does it conform to the standard of a history. It fails to attain such standard because of the excess of historical material, its loose arrangement, and lack of a central point of view. Some of these shortcomings can be partly explained by the peculiar circumstances under which the history was written. Not only was it composed during years of storm and stress, and at intervals, between diplomatic journeys of the author, but it possesses also a propagandistic tendency and purpose. It was written with an eye to the non-Jewish world, for, as the author says in his preface, he makes the attempt to trace "the origin and development of the Zionist idea principally in England and partly in France during the last centuries among Gentiles and Jews." In accordance with this purpose, the content of the book is arranged. After a rather lengthy introduction in which the author gives a brief account of the place the longing for a return to Zion held in Jewish history, and states succinctly the principles of political Zionism and exchanges blows with

its opponents defeating their arguments, he devotes the larger part of the first volume to the delineation of the attitude of the English people toward Zionism as revealed in the political history and in the literature of England. Of the fifty-three chapters thirty-one are dedicated to this task, which the author fulfills quite successfully. Beginning with a brief chapter dealing with the place of the Bible in English life, Sokolow presents seriatim the various efforts made by numerous English divines, writers, and statesmen from the middle of the seventeenth to that of the nineteenth century, to center the attention of the world upon the restoration of Palestine to the Jews; and one is astonished to discover how many plans for that restoration were propounded during these two centuries before the actual Zionist idea began to assume any definite form among the Jews themselves. These appeals for the Jewish restoration on the part of Gentiles were made from various motives, religious, ethical, and political, the first though predominating. We learn that as late as the year 1837, a memorandum was addressed by many English divines and pious laymen to the Protestant monarchs of Europe calling upon them to restore Palestine to the Jews, and thus fulfill the covenant God had made with Abraham (Ch. XXIV). In the same year, several other memoranda were circulated in the press in which England was urged to restore Palestine to the Jews for political reasons. Of special interest are the chapters devoted to the Zionist activities on behalf of Jewish restoration of Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885), who became prominent as a social reformer. This noble lord was indefatigable in his efforts on behalf of the Jews, and for a number of years (1830-1840) he presented memorandum after memorandum to the Premier, Lord Palmerston, urging the settlement of the Jews in Palestine as a political measure which would conduce to the pacification of the turbulent near East. Thus does our author present a series of attempts by leading Englishmen on behalf of a Jewish restoration. Several chapters deal with similar attempts in France. Concentration on a single theme is, however, not one of Sokolow's virtues, for he could seldom restrain his overflowing knowledge, and consequently there are numerous digressions in the volume. There are chapters on Menasseh ben Israel and his efforts on behalf of the readmission of the Jews into England, on his Gentile friends, on Napoleon's campaign in Palestine and on the *Sanhedrin* convened by him, on the Palestine exploration work, on political problems, and many other subjects. Each of these topics is in itself of interest but

the sequence of their discussions in the volume is rather loose. The volume concludes with a number of chapters offering a survey of the progress the national movement made in its first stage, that of the *Hobebé Zion*.

The larger part of the second volume is devoted to appendices of which there are ninety-four. The six chapters of the text deal with the history of political Zionism from the fourth Congress to the year 1918. The part of the work dealing with Zionism during the War is of gripping interest as it accounts in detail the political activities of the Zionist leaders—in which Sokolow himself took a leading part—which made the Balfour Declaration possible. The range of the appendices is wide and embracive and covers a variety of subjects, from lengthy quotations of prophetic passages on the return of the Jews to Palestine and their interpretations to statistics on Palestine colonization, or to an excerpt of a poem by Emma Lazarus (Sec. 133). Of special value and importance are those which contain rare documents bearing on early Zionist efforts in England and appeals for the restoration of Palestine to the Jews made in the seventeenth century. The most curious of these are the excerpts from an anonymous work written in Latin entitled *Nova Solyma: The Ideal City, or Jerusalem Regained*, published in 1648. It was for a time attributed to the poet, John Milton, but its author was Samuel Gott (1613-1671). It is a Utopian romance picturing life in a restored Jewish state and the ideal political order of that state as observed by three tourists, two Englishmen and a Sicilian. The zeal of the author for the idea he propounds is reflected in the Latin motto of this book which reads in translation thus: “‘Whose is the book?’ do you ask. Why propound such useless enquiry? If you but read and enjoy, you will have made it your own.” We have thus the earliest Palestinian Utopia, preceding that of Levinski (Sec. 18) by two hundred and fifty years.

Of the other appendices there are to be noted the seventy-fifth, eightieth, eighty-first, and the eighty-second. The first (75) is a brief monograph on the activities of the leading Zionists from the early days to the year 1918, and contains also a succinct account of the development of modern Hebrew literature and evaluations of the leading writers. The second reviews the influence of Zionism on Jewish art; the third surveys Zionist activities in West-European countries and in the United States from 1897 to 1918; and the fourth deals with the Zionist institutions.

107. SOURCE BOOKS

The intensive and extensive activity in the field of history in its several phases which was hitherto described was facilitated to a large degree by the indefatigable labor of a number of scholars who devoted themselves not to the writing of history but to the discovery of its sources, to hewing the stones from which the building was to be constructed. Much was accomplished in this direction by the great builders of Jewish learning or science in the preceding period (Vol. III, Ch. X) but there were still many gaps in Jewish history which had to be filled, and this work was done by later scholars who delved in archives or pored over ancient inscriptions, or used the spade to reveal vestiges of old which the earth had covered. Others scanned the extensive literatures of the ages, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and gleaned from them whatever data they could extract. Thus, a quite extensive literature was built up. That literature can, on the whole, be divided into two classes: (a) one which embraces works containing the sources themselves with as little comment as possible, which were edited mostly by the discoverers or finders of the manuscripts or inscriptions; and (b) works consisting of collections of extracts from books bearing upon a phase of history systematically arranged, classified, and often interpreted. These works filled the lacunae in many a period or helped to clarify the conceptions of aspects of Jewish life and culture of the past or the present. To this type of literature belong also historical anthologies and source books of a popular nature, the purpose of which is to intensify the knowledge of Jewish history of students of all classes by bringing them in contact with first-hand sources.

i. We will now note the most important of such works. The first is Theodore Reinach's book, *Textes d'auteurs Grecs et Romains relatifs au Judaïsme* (Texts of Greek and Roman Authors Bearing Upon Judaism). In this volume the author collected two hundred extracts from the works of Greek and Roman writers which deal in one way or another with Jews or Judaism. The works from which the excerpts are drawn are either historical or geographical, or philosophical, or poetic. Judicial texts or inscriptions were intended to be included in another volume, and similarly excerpts from early Christian writers were supposed to be collected in a separate work. The texts in this volume are limited to the ancient pagan writers. The Greek texts begin with Herodotus who lived in the middle of the fifth century

B.C.E. and end with Nicolaus Damascene, a philosopher of the first half of the fifth century C.E. Before Herodotus, the Jews are not mentioned in Greek literature. The Latin texts begin with the writings of Cicero in the second half of the first century, and end with Macrobius (d. 422 C.E.). The documents thus cover a period of nine hundred years, or more exactly—since Herodotus refers to the Jews casually and that only under the name of Syrians of Palestine—of seven centuries. Theophrastes, the earliest writer who mentioned the Jews by name, died in 287 B.C. The large number of texts, culled from the works of many writers, demonstrate the great role Jews and Judaism played in the ancient world, especially since a very large part of the classical literature was lost and destroyed. There was hardly a writer of consequence who did not touch on them and their religion in some way.

The historical value of these extracts, as the compiler tells us in his preface, is twofold. First, a number of strictly historical excerpts serve as sources for the political and external history of the Jews during that period. They are important even for the centuries covered by the history of Josephus, as they can serve as a check on his data, and are still more valuable for the several centuries after Josephus for the history of which they supply the actual data. Secondly, the larger part of them greatly elucidate the genesis of the anti-Jewish feeling which was manifested through the ages in one form or another. Its origin is in classical literature which passed over together with a great part of ancient civilization to the Church and thence to the European nations. Most of these extracts contain unfavorable opinions of the Jews and are replete with calumnies and groundless accusations. The only sympathetic expressions come from the circles of philosophers who respected the Jewish conception of the Deity. This is not the place to analyze the reasons for the antipathy and the sources of the errors. Suffice it to say that the Jews were not disliked on racial grounds, nor for economic causes, and certainly not because of religious fanaticism. The reason for the unfriendly attitude of the Greeks and Romans toward the Jews was their religious and social particularism, which, of course, are only two aspects of one phenomenon, for religious isolation led to social separation. The Greeks resented the Jewish monopoly of truth, and still more, their aloofness as expressed in their refusal to eat or drink with Gentiles, or to participate in their cult or games. They interpreted the abstention as a result of pride and arrogance. Consequently, they, especially the educated

literati, heaped upon them all kinds of abuses, with the intent to villify their origin, civilization, and even their religion. They invented fables that the Jews worshipped the heavens and even the image of the head of an ass. That the very writers did not take such accusations seriously can be seen from the following instance. Tacitus gives in one chapter two contradictory reports about the Jewish religion. At first he says, "The image of the animal, whose tracks indicated to them where water might be found in the desert as well as the right road, is placed in the sanctuary."¹⁰ A few pages later he says, The God of the Jews is a being supreme and eternal who does not tolerate any images in their cities and especially in their temples." Accuracy, criticism, and uniformity were not the forté of ancient historians. They loved to tell fables, even when they doubted their veracity. The texts are given in the original languages with French translation and many elucidating notes.

ii. A collection of valuable historical documents was edited and published by Adolph Neubauer under the title *Anecdota Oxoniensis or Seder ha-Hakomim we-Korot Dibré ha-Yomim* (The Order of Generations of Scholars and Books of History). It contains texts of well known chronicles, newly discovered chronicles, and fragments found in manuscripts, chiefly in the Bodleian library. The texts, such as *Megillat Ta'anit* (Scroll of Feasts), *The Letter of Sherira Gaon*, *Sefer Yuhasin*, and the *Seder Olam*, which were already printed several times, were edited with additions or changes from manuscripts which improved to a degree their importance. The value of Neubauer's work consists mainly in the new historical sources which he published from manuscripts. The most important of these are: *The Chronicle of Joseph Sambari*, written in 1571, which contains valuable material for the history of the Jews in Egypt; the *Megillat Ahima'az* (The Scroll of Ahimaaz), composed in 1055, which throws new light upon the history of the Jews in Southern Italy; and the *Diary or Autobiography of David Reubeni*, the famous Jewish adventurer of the sixteenth century, which reveals certain phases of that outstanding but puzzling personality.¹¹

Besides these complete works there are many extracts and fragments from manuscripts which contain new historical material. This collec-

¹⁰ In an earlier chapter he tells that when the Jews were lost in the desert and were without water, Moses saw a pack of asses going in a certain direction. He followed them and found water and the right road.

¹¹ For the content of the books mentioned see Vol. I, Sec. 191, and Vol. II, Sec. 138.

tion enriched the knowledge of Jewish history and afforded scholars material for interpretation and discussion.

iii. An historical source book of importance, embrative in its quantity and distinguished by its quality, is the *Mekorot u-Teudot* (Sources and Documents) by Ben Zion Dinaburg (1884). The task the author set for himself was to issue eight volumes of sources to cover the entire Jewish history, divided into two series, one called *Yisrael be-Arẓo* (Israel in his Land), embracing the period from early times to the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs in 632, and the other entitled *Yisrael ba-Golah* (Israel in Exile) from that date to our own days. The first volume of the latter series was published in 1919 in Russia, but on account of the political disturbances in that country the further publication of the work was discontinued and was resumed seven years later in Palestine with the issue of the four volumes of the second series.

The general division of Jewish history into two large periods, namely that of the nation on its land and the nation in exile, is interesting on account of its novel point of view in not terminating the first with the year 70 C.E. as is usually done, but prolonging it to 632. The author justifies his innovation by arguing that up to the coming of the Arabs to Palestine, the Jews had constituted a large element of the population and moreover, they had also tilled the soil to a considerable extent, thus establishing a strong bond between the nation and its land. It was only after the Arabs became a majority in the land and the bond between Israel and Palestine was weakened that the real exile began. It is evident that the author wants to emphasize the relation of the Jews to Palestine as the most important factor in their history, but it is doubtful whether he is justified in his division for the following reasons. During the four centuries, from 200 to 600 C.E., Palestine exerted much less influence on world Jewry than Babylon, especially from the beginning of the fourth century on, when the Jews of Palestine began to be oppressed by the Christian emperors. Furthermore, we have really no statistical data on the Jewish population in Palestine, nor on the area of their settlement in the entire land,—it seems that it concentrated mainly in Galilee—nor on the extent of their land ownership. We can only conclude from the occasional revolts and the help extended by them to the Persians who conquered Palestine at the beginning of the seventh century that the number of Jews in Palestine was considerable. It is true that the Moslem conquest of the Holy Land constitutes an important event in Jewish history, for it reduced the number of Jewish

settlements and consequently diminished its influence, but it does not have the importance our author ascribes to it. The year 200 would have been a far better choice for the general division.

However, this point is not of much relevance. The author has a greater problem before him and that is the division and arrangement of periods and epochs in Mediaeval Jewish history, and to this problem he devotes the greater part of his interesting introduction. He attempts to find unity in Jewish history in spite of its diversity and the dispersion.

Superfluous to say that Dinaburg views Jewish history, even in exile, as that of an organic nation, a view which was already propounded by Graetz. Moreover, with Dubnow he insists that the nation as a whole and not only its spiritual manifestations, as with Graetz, should be the subject of the history, and even endeavors to define the elements of the organic unity which contributed to the nationality of the Jews in dispersion. These are two: (a) the social-psychological, namely the social stream of consciousness of a common past, or in the terminology of Aḥad ha'Am, the background of the national ego; and (b) the common state of culture which all dispersed Jewries participated in. These he calls the national statics. The national dynamics were the economic, social, and juristic positions of the Jews in various lands, which were dependent to a very large degree on the good will of governments and nations. There is much truth in these views, but not the whole truth, as they are too general and evince a tendency towards secularization of Jewish history.

On the basis of these views, the author proceeds to offer his own division of Jewish history of the Mediaeval and Modern periods. In general he divides the periods into two alternating series, those of adjustment and those of crises. They are as follows: (1) First period of adjustment from 636 to 1096, one of expansion of settlements in Europe and the East; (2) first period of crisis from 1096-1215; (3) second period of adjustment, 1215-1350, adjustment of Jews to status of servitude to the crown; (4) second period of crisis, 1350-1496; (5) third period of adjustment, 1496-1648; (6) third period of crisis, 1648-1789; (7) fourth period of adjustment, 1789-1880; and (8) fourth period of crisis, 1880 to our own days.

This scheme is, on the whole, a rational one though not entirely correct, as, for instance, the first period of crisis embraced only the Jewish settlements in Western Europe, but not those of Spain and Italy. Still, it could serve as a working basis, and did so for the author. Accord-

ingly, the volumes of the second series embrace the sources for the periods from 636 to 1096, 1096 to 1496, from 1496 to 1789, and from that date to the end of the last century, respectively. The volumes are subdivided into books limited to the periods indicated. Dinaburg, however, was forced to deviate from his own scheme and not treat world Jewry as a whole but give special attention to certain centers, such as Babylon, Palestine, and Spain.

The material covers all phases of Jewish life, political, social, economic, and cultural. However, greater attention is given to the last three aspects than to the first. Many chapters deal with the organization of the communities, courts, and other phases of social life. Other chapters illustrate the spiritual and cultural conditions, the rise of sects, Messianic movements, use of vernaculars, spread of learning and literature, while the political and juristic positions, on the other hand, are treated very briefly. The material collected is enormous and is drawn from all possible sources, Jewish and non-Jewish, the former, though, predominating, and the latest discoveries are fully utilized.

All these qualities make the work a first class contribution to Jewish history. There are, though, some deficiencies. It suffers from too much material and lack of proper selection; numerous quotations are too brief adding practically nothing to the subject; there is lack of proper chronological arrangement in sections; and later documents are quoted before earlier ones. Again there is an unnecessary multiplicity of titles. Thus on page forty-nine of volume I, there is a heading "Expulsions and Persecutions," and illustrations from the sources consist of two items which occupy only four lines. Such examples could be easily multiplied. Finally, while much space is given to the learning and literature of the Spanish Jews, the intellectual activity of the Franco-German center, such as the school of Rashi and the Tosafists are hardly referred to. Even Rashi himself is not treated properly while special chapters are devoted to Saadia and Maimonides. These, though, impair little the value of the great work which is enhanced by the chronological tables and elucidating notes.

iv. Two valuable collections of sources for the history of two important aspects of Jewish life in Mediaeval times are those compiled by S. Asaf (1889), *ha-Onshin Ahrè Hatimat ha-Talmud* (Punishment for Offences Administered by Jews After the Close of the Talmud) and *Meqorot le-Toldot ha-Hinukh be-Yisrael* (Sources for the History of Education in Israel). Both works are limited entirely to Jewish sources

and consist of excerpts from collections of Responsa, prefaces or introductions to books, and ordinances enacted from time to time by leading communities.

The first, as the title indicates, deals with the juristic activities of Jewish communities or those of leading Rabbis and reveals to us the extent of the autonomy granted by various governments to the Jews, as well as the excellent organization of the communities and the care they took to preserve law, order, and moral purity among their members. We learn from the numerous excerpts that Jewish courts were empowered to pronounce even death sentences and that on occasion they had inflicted other grave punishments, such as mutilation or flagellation. The first type of punishment, though, was limited to Spain, but the second was practiced also in Poland, while flagellation was administered by authorities in several Jewries. Capital punishment was inflicted primarily on informers who endangered the existence of the group, and in rare cases, also on murderers, and there is even a case on record where a rebellious judge was threatened with that sentence. Mutilation was reserved as punishment for murderers, adulterers, blasphemers, and informers. There is also a case on record where a famous Rabbi in Poland ordered the ears of a recalcitrant thief cut off. Flagellation was meted out for a number of crimes, as informing, adultery, wife beating, and others. Under the influence of the environment, such punishments as shaving the hair of the head or even branding a mark of shame were at times employed, the latter mainly for repeated acts of adultery.

The community also maintained prisons both for detention and punishment. Among those who were given prison sentences were women who indulged in card playing, and at times even people who were suspected of false bankruptcy. This is contrary to Talmudic law, but there were many changes which life introduced in Jewish law. Among these is to be noted the ordinances of many Spanish communities to administer an oath to witnesses before their testimony, a procedure which is unknown in Talmudic law. The ban (*Herem*) was the most prevalent means for maintaining law and order. It was used for offences against the group and against the individual; among the latter were slander and insult. Thus the author quotes a decision by Mordecai ben Hillel, a famous thirteenth century Rabbi of Germany, in the case of a man who insulted a woman by ordering him to fast for three days, sit barefooted before the synagogue, and publicly apologize to her. These few examples give us a glimpse into Jewish life and enable us to understand

partially some of the factors which conduced to that elevated morale which enabled the Jewish group to survive all persecutions and attacks.

Another factor in that survival is the intensive cultivation of Jewish education which is presented to us in the second work. The sources deal only with education in France, Germany, Poland, and other Slavonic countries. Those for Spain, the Provence, and Italy, were intended for another volume. The sources, especially those drawn from archives of communities (Pinkasim), i.e., minutes and records of communal council meetings, reveal to us the extensive and intensive care taken by the leaders for the spread and regulation of Jewish education. We may remark that the ordinances can compare favorably with the rules of a modern Board of Education maintained by a city government.

The following example will give us an inkling of the high value placed on education by the Jews in those times. The Cracow community, and most likely others, passed an ordinance that one who is delinquent in paying tuition for his son should be forced to do so by arrest, or by being placed under a ban, or by taking a pawn from him. A historian of the sixteenth century tells us that it was customary in Poland, even for a community of only fifty members to support at least thirty students.

The sources also reveal to us the extent of protests by famous Rabbis and leaders against the one-sidedness of education among the Jews of these lands which limited instruction primarily to the Talmud and its commentaries, neglecting the study of the Bible and Hebrew grammar. The protests were especially vigorous against the excessive dialectical method known as *Pilpul*. They were not always effective, but we can see that the reform of Jewish education began much earlier than the Haskalah period (see Vol. III, Sec. 18). Among other interesting data given in the book, there is to be noted the attempt made in the second half of the sixteenth century by two Italian scholars, David Provenzali and his son Abraham, to arouse the Jews of that country to establish a Jewish university where not only Jewish subjects should be studied but also the sciences and philosophy. It was never realized, but the mere attempt is significant. Both works contain instructive introductions in which an effort is made to present the results to be deduced from the material collected.

v. The *Sefer ha-Demaot* (The Book of Tears) by S. Bernfeld is a three volume source collection for the history of persecutions and mas-

sacres which took place during the two and a half millennia, from the time of Antiochus Epiphanes in 165 B.C.E. to the year 1768. The first volume covers the period from its starting point to the expulsion of the Jews from England in the year 1289; the second from the massacres in Germany in 1298, known as the *Rindfleisch* persecutions to the burning of the Marranos in Ancona in 1556; and the third from that date to the Gonta massacres in the Ukraine in 1768. The compiler was so overwhelmed by the extent and depth of suffering of his brethren that he could not continue his gruesome tale to its end.

The excerpts among which are included numerous elegies on the martyrs of many communities, written by eye-witnesses, are drawn from the entire Jewish literature, and many from manuscripts which have come to light only recently. They contain, besides elegies which form only a small part of the work, descriptions by contemporaries, records from community archives, and long lists of martyrs from memorial records in many German, Polish, and Ukrainian synagogues. These names used to be mentioned in the memorial services held by the Jews on the last days of the three principal holidays and on the Day of Atonement. The excerpts are given *in extenso*, and though they form only a small part of this sad literature, they occupy more than a thousand pages.

The historical and tragic importance of this anthology of martyrdom is exceedingly great. In no other literature do we find the deep tragedy of an entire people suffering the agonies of hell and the pangs of torture for over two millennia drawn on such a wide canvas as in this book. However, it is more than a martyrology; it is also a song of glory to the noble spirits of Israel who underwent this millennial crucifixion for the sake of their religion, culture, and Torah. Individuals by the thousands were forcibly swept away by the storms or even voluntarily separated themselves from their people but the trunk and its branches withstood the battering gales. The anthology presents also a vigorous accusation and protest against all nations who embittered the life of that people. It serves as a source of inspiration and encouragement to millions of Jews today who are still undergoing suffering and humiliation. We will not attempt to offer illustrations. Suffice it to say that the number of Jews killed in the three massacres which succeeded the Crusades, namely that of *Rindfleisch* in 1298, of the Black Death in 1350, and the Cossack rebellion in the years 1648-49, is estimated by the sources to have

been over a million. The number that perished in the last massacre alone is given by one chronicler as a little over six hundred thousand. Even if we were to cut that million by a half, the number of martyrs is appalling considering that these three massacres are only a small fraction of the total number.

The volumes are furnished with introductions in which the editor gives a composite picture of the position of the Jews during the periods covered and also attempts to determine the changes in the hatred towards the Jews during the ages, and describe its causes and aspects. At the end of the last introduction he asks a pertinent question, "What is the rationale of this long tragedy? How can those who believe in moral progress and in a just order in the life of humanity justify it?" To this question he found no answer.

108. LITERARY HISTORY

The history of literature forms in this period, as in the preceding one, a subject of great interest to Jewish scholars, and many are the works which deal with its various phases or branches. Most of them, though, are limited in their scope and consist either of editions of various works of Mediaeval writers on different subjects, published for the first time from manuscripts or of new editions of collections of poems of famous singers of the Middle Ages, or of collections of documents newly discovered bearing upon the history of one or the other phases of Jewish literature, or monographs dealing with small portions of that vast subject.

i. There are, though, a number of works which deal with the history of whole periods of Jewish literature or with important phases of that literature in a comprehensive and embracing manner. To the last type belongs *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* by Ismar Elbogen (1874). As the author tells us in the preface, the work purports to present a comprehensive view of divine worship both in its literary aspect and as a religious and cultural institution in a systematic historical way. It is for this reason that the work includes, in addition to a history and description of the prayer-books and of the sacred poetry known as *Piyyut*, also a survey of the organization of divine worship as an institution of the Jewish community. It includes the discussion of external phases of worship, such as the structure and style of architecture of the synagogue, its equipment,

names found in Jewish literature for the house of worship, the office of the cantor or reader, and that of sacred music. The bulk of the book, however, is devoted to the literary aspects of divine worship.

The book opens with a short introduction wherein we are told of the scope of the work, namely, that it embraces, besides the external forms of worship described above, also ancillary subjects, such as the reading of the Torah, the prophetic portions (Haftorot), and the Scrolls of the Hagiographa, as well as translations and interpretations of the Scriptures, and that it excludes all discussion of the cult of sacrifices as well as of private prayers, as grace after meal, prayers of sanctification recited at home at the entry and departure of the Sabbath, and similar matters. This is followed by remarks on the several stages of the development of divine worship and its final standardized form by brief definitions of the various names applied to the main parts of the prayers, such as *Berak̄ah* to prayers of praise or hymns, *Tefillah* to prayers of supplication, and the wider connotation which the terms assumed through the ages. The introduction concludes with statements on the nature of the collections of prayers, known as the *Siddur* (Order) and *Mahzor* (Cycle), and the various rituals of the different Jewries, as the Sephardic and Ashkenazic, and several others. He then proceeds to give a lengthy description of the prayers of the week day, the Sabbath, festival services, the reading of the Law and its interpretation, and sacred poetry, in four chapters respectively, which complete the first part of the work. Of the five parts into which the weekly morning service is divided, attention is given by our author primarily to the third and fourth, namely the *Shema*, together with the preceding and following benedictions and the *Tefillah* or *Shemoneh Esré*, both of which represent the fundamental service. The description is detailed and scientific as attempts are made to evolve the older form of each prayer, disentangling it from later additions, to determine the origin and the date of composition, and to note the various deviations in the wording found in the different rituals, all of which go back to the two main orders, the Palestinian and the Babylonian. In reality, these deviations are minor ones implying only changes in the wording of the prayers and not in their content. Furthermore, we note that even when the Germanic ritual adopted the Babylonian version of prayer, it also retained the Palestinian version in its Sabbath or festival service.

The *Shemoneh Esré* is discussed in greater detail both in its historical order of composition and in its wording. Elbogen is, on the whole, very

conservative in his view of the origin of this important part of the service, and believes that almost all the benedictions date from the time of the Second Temple with the exception of the one against heretics and informers (XII in the present order), which, as stated in the Talmud, was composed by Samuel the Younger at the order of the Patriarch, Gamaliel the Second; the expressions in the benedictions, however, were altered to fit the changed conditions. In explaining the present number of nineteen benedictions contained in the *Tefillah*, in spite of its title *Eighteen Benedictions*, Elbogen rejects the opinion of many scholars that it is due to the later addition of the benediction against heretics, but asserts that the Davidic benediction (No. XV) was added in Babylonia and was not contained in the original Palestinian version. In the same extensive manner does he describe the other parts of the daily morning, afternoon, and evening services as well as those of the Sabbath and festivals.

The description of the prayers is followed by a detailed historical analysis of the reading of the Law and the prophetic portions. In determining the origin of this institution, our author is likewise conservative, dating it from the time of Ezra, but he deviates from the traditional view in important details. He asserts that this institution had passed through a number of stages. The first stage was the reading of the Law on the three leading holidays, Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and Tabernacles, which arose out of the need to explain the laws connected with them as well as to vindicate the Jewish interpretation against that of the Samaritan. This was followed by the reading of the Law on New Years and the Day of Atonement, and on the four important Sabbaths before Passover, namely *Shekalim*, *Zakor*, *Parah*, and *Hodesh*. Then the reading of the Law was extended to every Sabbath. This theory, though apparently plausible, is doubtful, for the institution of the reading of the Law dates, as the author himself states, from the early centuries of the Second Commonwealth, and as such it could not have passed the enumerated stages. The reading of the portion of Amalek (Deut. XXV, 17-19) on the Sabbath Zakor preceding Purim depends not only upon the celebration of that festival but also on a Midrashic identification of the name *Agagi*, which was the family name of Haman, with Agag, the king of the Amalekites who was captured by Saul. But we can hardly determine the time when Purim began to be celebrated regularly, and certainly not the time when the identification of the ancestry of Haman imparted special importance to the particular

Sabbath. The special reading on that Sabbath undoubtedly followed the Sabbatical reading of the Law and did not precede it. We have to assume, therefore, that the reading of the weekly portion arose merely from a desire to instruct the people in the Law and religion which became manifest in the generations after Ezra. The other aspects of this institution, such as the question of cycles or portions on which the Babylonians and Palestinians differed, the reading of the prophets, and the translations are discussed and elucidated by the author.

The concluding section of the first part deals with *Piyyut* or sacred poetry. In it the author discusses briefly the origin of *Piyyut*, its various classes, its forms of composition and their character, and its intimate relation with the parts of the service are surveyed succinctly but comprehensively.

The second part is devoted to a general historical survey of the various forces and factors which affected both the service and the *Piyyut* from early times to our days, including the Modern Period. The author divides the long span of time into epochs: the early epoch from the time of the Great Assembly to the first Tannaitic generation (c. 10 B.C.E.) when the foundations of the prayers were laid; the Tannaitic beginning with the destruction of the Temple during which the principal parts of the service were standardized; the Amoraic epoch which was one of expansion, when many new prayers were added; and the long post-Talmudic epoch. It was during this epoch that sacred poetry made its entrance into the service and the various rituals arose, and the service as a whole was subject to many influences. Especially interesting is the chapter on the influence of mysticism on the prayer-book, in which the author describes a number of prayers, such as the various *Kedushas* and others, which are permeated with the spirit of mysticism.

Considerable space is also devoted to the attempts of the leaders of the Reform movement to adapt the ancient service to modern conditions. The author, though himself a sympathizer with that tendency, admits that these changes and modernizations have not fulfilled the hopes of the men who undertook them. They have not deepened the religiosity of the worshippers nor have they lessened the indifference of the younger generation to religious worship. A revival of the ancient spirit of devotion through the service and the arousing of religious inspiration in the hearts of the worshippers are still problems to be solved.

The section on the history of sacred poetry is a fine monograph on its various phases. It surveys the development of *Piyyut*, the works of the leading *Paitanim* in all countries, characterizes various types of poetry, and discusses the *Siddurim*, i.e., collections of standard prayers only, and the *Mahzorim*, collections which include also *Piyyutim* of the leading Jewries. The section on the organization of the service and the place of the synagogue in relation to the community completes the work. A number of notes placed at the end of the book which give references and additional data, enhance the value of this important history of divine service as a literary expression and as a religious cultural institution.

Much work was done by scholars in the field of Mediaeval Jewish poetry and Rabbinics. This work, however, expressed itself primarily in the publication of improved editions and critical collections of poems of the leading bards of the Golden Age, or of manuscripts of Diwans by known poets, or Rabbinic treatises and commentaries by famous authorities.

ii. One of the most diligent workers in the field of Mediaeval Hebrew poetry is Hayyim (Heinrich) Brody (1868), a Biblical scholar and master of the entire field of Mediaeval Hebrew literature, whose chosen field, though, is the poetry of the Middle Ages. To this work he devoted more than forty years of assiduous labor, enriching this important branch of literature with many editions of the works of leading poets. Among the noted of these editions are those of the *Metek Sfatayyim* (Sweetness of the Lips), a treatise on the Hebrew prosody by the Jewish Italian poet, Emanuel Francis (Vol. II, Sec. 37); *Shir ha-Shirim*, the Diwan of the secular poems of Solomon Ibn Gabirol; *Kol Shiré Rabbi Shemuel ha-Nagid*, the first two parts of a complete collection of the poems of Samuel the Prince (Vol. I, Sec. 123); the Diwan of Judah ha-Levi, of which three large volumes have appeared; and the *Mahborot* of Immanuel of Rome.

Besides these masterful editions of the work of the leading bards, he edited smaller collections of less known singers and *Paitanim* from manuscripts discovered in the *Genizah* and other places which he published in various periodicals. The editions of Brody are distinguished not only by the correctness of the texts which he prepared painstakingly and by great philological knowledge, but primarily by the keen insight into the nature and the spirit of Mediaeval Hebrew poetry. This student of Hebrew song is endowed with a remarkable sense for under-

standing difficult texts, which are found in great numbers in the compositions of the poets of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the texts, due to faulty manuscripts, are often found in mutilated form and it takes all the ingenuity of the editor to elicit the right meaning of the stanzas, or the proper meter of the lines, or to restore the original words. Brody overcame these difficulties and his comments and notes are elucidating and bring out the vigor and depth of the poets of old. He thus continued the work of S. D. Luzzatto in interpreting the lofty poems of ha-Levi, Gabirol, Moses Ibn Ezra, and other poets of the former age.

iii. Gabirol, as was noted in the preceding volume (Vol. III, Sec. 89), was the favorite of students of Hebrew poetry. Yet, in spite of these partial editions and collections of poems, there was not one complete nor correct collection of the poems of this gifted singer until recently. The task was undertaken by the late poet, Hayyim Nahman Bialik, who planned a series of such editions. In collaboration with I. H. Rabnizki, he published a six-volume edition of the poems of Gabirol, both the secular and the sacred. Of the six volumes four contain poems, and two comments and notes. The number of poems amount to over four hundred and were taken mostly from previously printed partial collections, and only a small number from manuscripts. However, with the exception of sixty-six secular poems edited by Brody, the others, though printed before, were in imperfect state, as most of them were incorrect, unpunctuated, and erroneously copied. The task of the editors was exceedingly difficult. It required great linguistic knowledge, poetic intuition, and comprehensive erudition to suggest the proper readings, to correct the meter, as well as to fathom the meaning of the poets whose mastery of the Hebrew language was all embracing and who frequently introduced new nuances into words and phrases. All these qualities were possessed by the editors, especially by Bialik. Furthermore, his love for the cherished heritage of the ages heightened his desire to redeem Gabirol from the obscurity and obtruseness of these erroneous editions. As a result, the edition of Bialik and Rabnizki in both its aspects, that of the text and the numerous notes and comments, is an important contribution to the study of Mediaeval Jewish poetry. A similar amount of labor, energy, and knowledge was also invested by them in the edition of the poems of another great singer of that period, Moses Ibn Ezra, of which, however, only one volume appeared, the one containing his secular poems. It contains seventy-seven poems of which forty-two were previously published. The other

thirty-five were published from manuscripts for the first time. The volume displays all the qualities of the edition of Gabirol and is like the former a valuable addition to Jewish literature.

iv. As an important contribution to the study of Mediaeval Hebrew poetry, we can count the essays of the late historian and literary critic, I. N. Simḥoni, on Judah ha-Levi as a national poet and on Solomon Ibn Gabirol, published in the annual, *ha-Ibri ha-Hadash*, and in several numbers of the quarterly, *ha-Tekufah*, respectively. They deal primarily with the nature and character of the poetry of these two luminaries of the Golden Age, the motives underlying their songs, and the problems, both individual and national, with which they grappled and for which they sought solutions. The central problem for these deeply religious souls, according to our essayist, was the contradiction between the Jewish ideal conception of God as a being of goodness, justice, and mercy, and the grim reality presented by the world in which evil, injustice, and might predominate. This tragic dualism was aggravated by the additional problem of Jewish suffering in exile with all its ominous consequences. Both of these bards attempted to solve the difficulties, each in his own way, and sought redemption from the tragedy of existence in different paths, ha-Levi in national aspirations and Gabirol in absorption in the *All*, and in religious ecstasy. Simḥoni contributes much to the understanding of the character of the singers as expressed in their poems, and his essays are among the best literary endeavors for the evaluation of their poetry.

v. Turning to the field of Rabbinics, we note first of all the outstanding work undertaken by B. M. Lewin, the *Ozar ha-Geonim* (A Gaonic Thesaurus). The task the author set for himself was to collect in one place all the Responsa and comments on Talmudic passages produced by the Babylonian *Geonim* from the beginning of the Gaonic period in 589 to its close in 1040. The Responsa and commentaries were never organized systematically, nor did they come down to us in complete collections but were scattered in many manuscripts. Two partial collections of Gaonic Responsa were published in earlier centuries, but much greater effort was made by Jewish scholars in the nineteenth century, and as a result, more than half a dozen collections of Responsa were edited and published. The discovery of the *Genizah* had stimulated study in the field and libraries were explored by many scholars in search of manuscripts containing Responsa or fragments of Gaonic works. The efforts bore fruit and new material was discovered.

Besides these collections of Responsa and the newly discovered material, hundreds of complete Responsa or parts are quoted in numerous Rabbinic works composed during the Middle Ages.

The commentaries of the *Geonim* fared much worse than the Responsa. With one exception, that of Rab Hai's commentary on the sixth order of the Mishnah, *Taharot*, no single complete commentary of any other Gaon has come down to us, and we possess only fragments of greater or lesser length. A large number of Gaonic comments and explanations of many Talmudic passages are preserved as quotations in the works of the great scholars of the Middle Ages which number in the hundreds. To gather all the Responsa, whether complete or partial, or fragmentary, from all sources, whether in print or in manuscripts and to extract all comments from the works in which they are quoted, was the task Lewin set for himself. In order to accomplish his task successfully, the editor introduced a system in the organization of the vast material by arranging all the Responsa and comments according to the order of the tractates, the Talmud. This method is a very plausible one not only for the comments and partial commentaries but also for the Responsa, since they also refer to the Talmudic passages on which the decision is based. Besides, many Responsa are in reality comments on Talmudic passages which were written in reply to inquiries from persons asking for interpretation of difficult places in the Talmud. The editor grouped together all Responsa which are based on passages of a certain tractate, and similarly all comments or partial commentaries on the same tractate, into one book which forms a part of a volume. Thus far, seven volumes have appeared, which contain the Responsa and comments of the *Geonim* grouped around thirteen tractates of the Talmud. The editor displays in the *Ozar* not only a mastery of the Gaonic literature but also a keen sense for logical ordering and systematization of a mass of literature hitherto scattered and dispersed in hundreds of books and manuscripts. In this way Lewin performed a great service not only to students of Rabbinic literature but also to the students of history, inasmuch as the great collection of Gaonic decisions, comments, expression of views and opinions throws light on many phases of the Jewish religion and culture.

There were many others who made important contributions in the field of Rabbinic literature though on a smaller scale than Lewin. Among them there are to be noted S. Asaf, I. N. Epstein, L. Ginzberg, and J. Mann. The first edited a collection of Gaonic Responsa

from manuscripts contained in the *Genizah*; the second published from time to time numerous Responsa and parts of Gaonic codes which he provided with notes and comments and historical introductions; as for the contributions of the last two scholars more will be said in the proper place.

109. *LIACHOWER'S AND KLAUSNER'S HISTORIES OF MODERN HEBREW LITERATURE*

Discussions of phases of modern Hebrew literature and writing of biographies of distinctive writers were favorite subjects of many critics and essayists both in Hebrew and in Yiddish, and frequently also of Jewish writers in other languages, during the period under discussion. Many are the essays and articles that deal with these subjects and there are also a number of biographical books, but not until the end of the twenties of this century was there produced a complete and comprehensive account of the modern Hebrew literature from its early days in the middle of the eighteenth century to our own times—in short, a history. This was first undertaken by Fischel Liachower (1884) in his *Toldot ha-Safrut ha-Ibrit ha-Hadashah* (The History of Modern Hebrew Literature) which was published in the years 1928-1932. Liachower was well equipped for a work of this kind, for he distinguished himself for over two decades as literary essayist, critic, and editor of a number of literary periodicals. He contributed to various publications essays on writers and studies and evaluations of schools and currents in recent Hebrew literature. His work, therefore, is distinguished by a wealth of material, mastery of the field, and keen appreciation of the individual creations of the leading authors, but on the other hand, it often lacks historical perspective.

i. The work is divided into four parts and comprises the history of Hebrew literature from Moses Hayyim Luzzatto (d. 1747, Vol. III, Sec. 17) to the end of the second decade of this century. It is not complete, for a number of distinguished writers who wrote in the last three decades are not included nor does the author touch upon the mass of Palestinian literature produced in the last few decades. He, however, included some of the omitted writers in a special collection of essays entitled *Rishonim ve-Ahronim* (Earlier and Later Writers). The omissions, though, do not detract from the value of the work for it gives a comprehensive survey of the history of Hebrew literary activity during a period of one hundred and seventy-five years. The survey is ar-

ranged in the following manner. The first part covers the time from Luzzatto to the end of the first Haskalah period or the close of the Haskalah movement in Western countries; the second part deals with the rise of the Haskalah in Galicia and ends with the close of that movement in Russia in the late seventies of the last century; and the other two parts embrace the literature during the period of nationalism.

The method is a chronological one, but it is modified by the use of other devices, such as the monographic, on the one hand, and the inclusion of a number of writers into one chapter by finding a characteristic common to all of them, on the other hand. In fact, a large part of the work consists of monographs on outstanding writers, poets, or essayists. The monographs on Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto, N. H. Wessely, Abraham Mapu, Perez Smolenskin, Judah Leib Gordon, David Frishman, J. L. Perez, Mendele, Aḥad ha-'Am, and M. Berdichewski occupy more than half the book. This method has its advantages from the point of view of the approach of the author to his History. We are told in the preface that he intended to write the History in two editions, a larger one for students of literature and a smaller one for the secondary schools, and that the one published is the smaller. For such a purpose the emphasis laid on the leading figures of the literature discussed is fully justified, since the students of Teachers' Seminars and other higher schools are primarily interested in these writers. Yet, in spite of the modesty of the author, the work is more than a text book, for it really surveys in a comprehensive, though often succinct, manner the entire modern Hebrew literature produced within the temporal boundaries set by the author. There is hardly a Hebrew writer, who lived and wrote during the long period of almost two hundred years, omitted, and even important translations from other languages are recorded and briefly evaluated. It is thus entitled to the name History, and it should be judged accordingly.

As such it is distinguished by a number of excellent qualities, and on the contrary, by several grave shortcomings. The latter are especially evident in the disproportionate treatment of the various types of literature. While the author discusses not only belles-lettres but also publicistic literature, essays, and even devotes several chapters to Hebrew works on *Hokmat Yisrael*, i.e. Jewish learning, the treatment of all other types of literature except fiction and poetry is exceedingly brief. Without going into detail we can only point out that our author, while

discussing the literary contributions of S. J. Rapoport and S. D. Luzzatto fails to give even a brief account of the contributions of these two leading scholars to the fields of Jewish history and literature. Suffice it to say that the first volume of the encyclopaedic dictionary of the former, *Ereḳ Milin* (Vol. III, Sec. 74), which is still of importance today, is not even mentioned by name, while Rapoport's poems and his drama which were of little significance even at the time when they were written are recorded and described. Likewise, in the fifteen pages devoted to Luzzatto, the author does not find place even for a brief description of his contribution to Biblical exegesis, Mediaeval Hebrew poetry, and history of Jewish literature. Similarly, in his account of Isaac Baer Levinson, he merely mentions his important work, *Zerubabel*, without an attempt to even state its theme, while he devotes a page and a half to the content of a satire of his of dubious literary value. On the other hand, our historian is exceedingly long in presenting the philosophical views of such thinkers as Krochmal and Luzzatto, especially in that of the former. Of the twenty-six pages dealing with Krochmal twenty are devoted to his philosophy, presented mostly in long quotations, without any attempt to give its substance, in the author's own words. The tendency to long quotations is in general too prevalent in the entire book, but while this is justified in the case of poetry and stories as a means of illustration from classical works, the case is not so otherwise.

The treatment of belles-lettres, both poetry and fiction, is primarily analytic, but not sufficiently critical, and details are often given excessive space. There is no effort made to draw a portrait of the writer or poet as a whole, nor is there an attempt to correlate literature and life even in a brief manner.

On the other hand, the work excels in its keen appreciation of the literary qualities of the authors dealt with, especially of the poets and leading novelists and short story writers, in its spirit of sympathy with the literature described, in its numerous details of a bibliographical nature, and finally in the succinct but comprehensive biographies of the outstanding authors. Valuable are also the resumés of the noted novels and the analysis of the style and vocabulary of the leading writers. A fine detailed bibliography at the end of each part enhances the usefulness and importance of the work. Judging it as a whole, we can consider it a successful attempt to present a fairly comprehensive

account of the varied Hebrew literature in the last two centuries in a systematic and coördinated manner and, in addition, distinguished by keen judgment and clarity of style.

ii. Larger in quantity, more comprehensive and detailed in content, and more scientific and painstaking in historical treatment, is J. Klausner's work, *Historiyah Shel ha-Safrut ha-Ibrit ha-Hadashah* (The History of Modern Hebrew Literature). Klausner, whose collection of critical essays was discussed by us above, and who had distinguished himself in the Hebrew literature of the period, both as critic and historian, undertook in the work to give a complete and all-embracing account of modern Hebrew literature during the first hundred years of its production, that is from Wessely to the death of Smolenskin (1781-1785), for unlike Liachower and others, he does not begin his history with Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto but with Wessely. He does not consider Luzzatto a representative of the modern spirit, for he believes that his mysticism and asceticism as well as his secret aspiration to become the forerunner of the Messiah relegate him to the Mediaeval age rather than to the modern period. He admits that Luzzatto's dramas are not only of great literary value and distinguished by originality, but have also influenced later Hebrew literature, serving as a model for imitation. He argues, though, that this influence came many years after the poet's death and that he had no immediate followers, while Wessely's influence, on the contrary, was direct and continuous. The correctness of such a point of view may be questioned for after all it is the quality of a literary production which should be taken into account in determining its proper place in a history of literature and not the views of the author and his activity in other fields, and Luzzatto's dramas are modern in spirit, form, and diction irrespective of the possibility that he might have attached a mystical value to them. But the omission of Luzzatto by our author does not in any way detract from the value of Klausner's work, and his claim, in the preface, that it is the first attempt to present the history of a century of modern Hebrew literature on a large scale drawn from first sources and intended for students of literature is fairly substantiated. The work grew out of lectures on the history of modern Hebrew literature delivered by the author, in his capacity as professor, to students at the Hebrew University at Jerusalem during a number of years. It was planned by the author to consist of four volumes, and thus far three have appeared, 1930, 1937, and 1939 respectively. This division into

volumes corresponds to the historian's division of the first century of modern Hebrew productivity into three periods, the Rationalistic or pseudo-Classic, from 1781-1830, the Romantic, 1830-1860, and the Realistic from 1860-1881. Neither the terms nor the chronological limitations are really accurate, for as was pointed out by us in the preceding volume, we can hardly speak of definite schools in modern Hebrew literature as there is constant overlapping and mingling of currents and tendencies. Klausner, in reality, adopted these terms and definitions from general literature, for he lays much stress upon the influence these tendencies and currents in general literature, especially the German, exerted upon Hebrew writers of these periods. Yet notwithstanding the inaccuracy of such appellations, they can well serve as guiding lines in the historical treatment of that literature, and to a degree rationalism is an outstanding characteristic of the first and romanticism of the second epoch. As for the realism of the third epoch, it is more nominal than actual, and certainly, except possibly in the writings of a few publicists of the time, it was not dominant.

Along with this differentiation in tendencies there is also a change of environment in the respective epochs; the rationalistic literature of the first Haskalah period was primarily produced in Western European countries, while the Romantic literature of the first epoch of the second Haskalah period in Galicia and Russia. It is according to this double division of tendency and countries that our author arranged his History. The first volume covers the rationalistic literature in Germany, Austria, Italy, and France up to 1830. The second deals primarily with Galician literature of the Romantic school; and the third deals with literature of the same school in Russia up to the year 1860 which belongs mainly to the same tendency.

The task the author placed for himself in the writing of his History was the solution of two difficult problems. The first is, how was it possible to produce a living literature, which dealt with subjects closely connected with life, in a dead language, in a language in the revival of which none of the writers of the period believed? The second is, how did this early literature (up to 1880) bring about the national revival and the resurrection of Hebrew as a spoken language? He believes that the key to the solution of these problems lies in a completely comprehensive presentation of the history of that literature in all its aspects, belletristic, publicistic, scholarly works, various forms of popular scientific literature, and especially the gradual development and ex-

pansion of diction and style. Hence, he discusses all these forms at great length and even devotes chapters to the leading periodicals of the first and second periods, such as the *Measef*, *Bikkurê ha-'Ittim*, the *Kerem Hemed*, and others, giving the contents of many numbers and almost complete lists of their contributors. It is superfluous to say that Jewish learning or *Hokmat Yisrael* receives full recognition. Not only are the works of leading scholars, such as Krochmal, Luzzatto, and Rapoport described in long chapters but also the lesser lights are given ample space. In fact, almost the entire second volume which occupies four hundred pages deals with works on Jewish history, Bible literature, philosophy, and similar subjects. Yet in spite of the intention to present the century of Hebrew literature as a continuous stream, the method is primarily monographic. Almost all of the three volumes consist of monographs on leading poets, novelists, historians, and Jewish thinkers. Klausner, though, justifies his method by saying that he did not want to merely mention many names of insignificant writers, but thought it rather more important to devote himself to the delineation of the lives and works of the leading men whose influence was extensive.

However, as far as the monographs are concerned the treatment is complete. Not only are the biographies of the writers given in full, and with a wealth of new data, but the evaluation of the works is equally comprehensive. The content of each book is given extensively, and every detail, historical as well as bibliographical, is stated at length. Moreover, quite frequently, as in the case of Mendelssohn and several others, the gist of the opinions of earlier historians and critics is given and discussed. Special attention is paid by the historian to the style of the writers which is analyzed at length, every new expression and term is noted, and in case of writers who contributed much to the modernization of the Hebrew style, such as Lefin, M. A. Günzburg, and others, even long lists of words and terms coined by them are enumerated. It is unnecessary to say that the author gives an extensive account of the reflections of thinkers or an evaluation of poets and novelists. The monograph on S. D. Luzzatto occupies eighty pages, that on Krochmal sixty-five, on Isaac Baer Levinson ninety-three pages, on A. B. Lebensohn thirty-eight, and on A. Mapu one hundred and four. In fact, this excessive length and complete detail of treatment at times mar the general portrait of the writers described, for the reader is lost in the maze of details. It is true that Klausner gives at the end of each monograph

a general evaluation of the man dealt with, but in most cases this summary is too brief and the general concept of the man is lost in the details.

It would lead us too far astray were we to follow the author in his individual judgment of writers and works. We will, therefore, merely note that, on the whole, they are fair and as objective as possible. In the second and third volumes devoted to the writers, poets, and novelists of the first epoch of the second Haskalah period in Galicia and Russia, he attempts to solve the second of the two problems he placed for himself and endeavors to emphasize the devotion of this entire generation of writers to their nation and religion, despite their frequent attacks on superstition and fanaticism, and above all he stresses their love for Hebrew and other national values. It is in these views that he finds some of the factors which prepared the ground for Zionism and the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. In this favorable judgment of the literature of that period he is, on the whole, right. It is to be regretted that the historian does not discuss explicitly the solution to the first problem, namely how a living literature was produced in a dead language. It seems that he leaves the inference to us, namely that to the producers of such a mass of literature of various aspects, the language wasn't dead, but alive, even if not spoken. From all that was said it can easily be concluded that Klausner's history is an important and lasting contribution to literary studies.

110. ZINBERG'S HISTORY OF JEWISH LITERATURE AND PARTIAL HISTORIES

The histories hitherto considered deal, as we have seen, with a single period and with literary productivity in Hebrew only, but the work of Israel Zinberg (1873) written in Yiddish, which began to appear in 1929 and is entitled *Geschichte fun Literatur bei Juden* (The History of Literature Among the Jews) covers a much longer span of time and includes Jewish literature in all languages for the period covered. It is not a complete history of Jewish literature since it is limited to the last millennium, beginning with the tenth century and was to end with the year 1914, and it is further circumscribed by geographical boundaries, as it deals only with the literature produced in European countries. The scope is still further limited by the point of view of the author which is expressed in the preface to the first volume. "For though," he says, "we place for ourselves the task to present as complete a survey as possible of the entire Jewish spiritual

and cultural production during the long period," the adjective entire is to be taken in a qualified sense. Stress is laid by him on the cultural and social aspects of Jewish life of which literature was an exponent rather than on literature itself. In fact, he is ever apprehensive lest the followers of a more formal method may consider his work a history of social and cultural movements rather than that of literature proper. This apprehension, however, is unfounded, for the extensive literary discussion in the work and the great mass of literature described and analyzed will deter anyone from questioning the correctness of the title. Yet the subservience of literature to culture is quite in evidence. Furthermore, his conception of literature as an expression of culture or even of Jewish culture seems to be somewhat narrow. Belles-lettres, especially poetry, ethics, mysticism, philosophy, and even polemics—all these seem to be, according to our author, the essential aspects of that culture, while all other expressions of literary productivity are of insignificant value. As a result, the extensive Rabbinic literature of the Mediaeval period which played such an important part in Jewish life during that time is passed over by the author almost in complete silence. Only a few of the most important books are mentioned by name. Similarly, the fields of Biblical exegesis, Hebrew lexicography, and grammar which are among the important contributions of the Jewish Middle Ages are excluded from the purview of our historian. Whether we can eliminate the literatures grouped around the Bible and the Talmud, the two important pivots around which Jewish spiritual life revolved, without marring the very picture of Jewish spirituality and culture is very questionable. However, whether right or wrong, this is the point of view of our historian according to which he limited the scope of his work to the above-mentioned branches of Jewish literature, and as such it should be judged.

However, in spite of its limited scope, the work possesses great value and importance, for the extensive mass of literature produced during a thousand years and comprising belles-lettres, ethics, mysticism, philosophy, and several other forms of literary expression is treated with a comprehensiveness, detail, and completeness rarely met with in histories of literature, and hence its great bulk. The history was planned to consist of eight volumes, each divided into two parts. In the actual publication the division was somewhat changed, and while eight volumes have already appeared, they contain only eight parts which bring the history down to the year 1869, and judging from the comprehen-

siveness of the preceding volumes we may expect another volume or two. Of these eight volumes, the first six are devoted to the literature of the Mediaeval period, while the last two deal with the literature of the Modern Period from Mendelssohn to 1869.

The method employed by our historian is to a very large degree determined by his point of view, which aims not only to give a history of literature but a history of culture as reflected in literature. It therefore resembles the one employed by Dubnow in his general Jewish history, namely the chronological-geographic, which is, that while the literature without distinction of its various branches is presented in the chronological order of production, it is further subdivided according to the various Jewish centers where it had arisen. Thus, volume one is devoted to the literature of the Golden Age in Spain; part one of volume two deals with the literary production of the Franco-German center including that of the Provence; part two with that of Italy in the same epoch, and this arrangement continues throughout the work with few exceptions. The most important of these exceptions is volume five which is devoted entirely to the Mediaeval Judaeo-German or Yiddish literature and is subdivided according to various branches which it comprises. This method has, of course, its advantages and disadvantages, but on the whole, it suits the purpose the author had in mind when he undertook his task.

Quantity is not the only distinction of this work for it has to its credit many excellent qualities. First of all, there is to be noted the great erudition of the author and his mastery of the literature as displayed in the treatment of the branches he chose, for there is hardly a work of any importance omitted. There is much new material which our historian brought together from manuscripts and from rare editions in his extensive research and preparation for the work. There are also numerous bibliographical data of historical and literary value as well as comprehensive biographies of the authors, especially of those of importance. He furthermore gives extensive extracts, translated into Yiddish, from the works of the writers he describes, in fact too many and too long, a feature which is both of advantage and disadvantage in a work of this type, and in the case of our author, the balance is unfortunately on the side of the latter. Again, true to his purpose, the author emphasizes the cultural aspect of the literature he discusses and in the introductory sections to parts as well as to chapters he surveys the cultural state of the Jews in the various centers with a certain emphasis

upon their relation to the general cultural status of the various European nations. Finally, there is a warm sympathy and a certain inner relation on the part of the historian to the works and authors he describes, at least to a large number of them. All these traits are great qualities and contribute to the excellence of the work.

Against all these distinctions we have to note several shortcomings which to a degree impair the value of the book as a history of literature. The principal one is the disproportion in the treatment of the various aspects of literature. The disproportion is of several kinds and arises partly from the author's limited definition of culture and narrow geographical boundaries, and partly from the predilection of the author for certain types of literature at the expense of others. Not only do we miss such literary personalities as Hannanel Gaon, Nissim Gaon—the latter contributed not only to Rabbinics but also to folk tales—Isaac Al-Fasi, and many other outstanding authors who are excluded both by geographic boundaries and by the conceptual limitation of culture which disregards Rabbinics, but even portraits of the men who are discussed appear defective on account of these limitations. Thus while a number of pages are devoted to Samuel Ibn Nagdela and especially to his poetry, his activity in the field of Rabbinics is mentioned in one line where his work, *Hilkata Gibarata* (Vol. I, Sec. 153) is erroneously described as a commentary on the Talmud instead of as a code. Likewise is his *Mebo ha-Talmud*, the first systematic introduction to this great work, given only a few lines. Worse still is the case of Abraham Ibn Ezra. Of the ten pages devoted to him almost all deal with his poetry and less than half a page is devoted to his commentary on the Bible, and of all its numerous qualities only one is mentioned, namely that he laid the foundation of Biblical criticism. And yet Ibn Ezra's contribution to Jewish culture and his influence on Jewish spiritual life are due primarily to his commentary. The same can be said about the treatment of Nahmanides; of the eight pages devoted to him which deal chiefly with his mystical views, two or three are devoted to his commentary on the Pentateuch which, in addition to being one of the leading works of exegesis, reflects his personality and views. The predilection of the author for certain types of literature, especially mysticism, makes this disproportion in treatment very glaring. While Abulafia, the eccentric Kabbalist, whose views hardly left a ripple on Jewish life, is described in eighteen pages, Rashi and his various literary activities is not even given half of that number. Such

examples of glaring disproportion could be multiplied but these will suffice.

Disproportion is also evident in the treatment of the same author and subject. To Gabirol, who is one of the favorites of our historian, he devotes forty-six pages, but of these, twenty-six deal with Gabirol's secular poetry in which much stress is laid upon his pessimism, expression of sorrow, and similar subjects, while to his religious poetry a page or two is allocated in spite of the fact that the religious motif plays such an important part in his poetry. In general, there is an evident inclination on the part of the author to impart an undue secular tendency to phases of Jewish literature, and he seems to be especially happy when he meets an author who expressed a rebellious attitude towards tradition and the law. As a result, Judah Aryé de-Modena, the eccentric character of the late Medieval Ages, is dealt with in thirty-five pages, four times as many as those devoted to Rashi. Mysticism is another favorite subject of our historian, and the space devoted to its numerous representatives is beyond all proportion. The discussions of the works and views of the many Kabbalists during the ages occupy almost a quarter of the entire work.

Another shortcoming is the exceptionally long excerpts and lack of systematic arrangement in the presentation of the views or the philosophy of a thinker or a spiritual current. The author endeavors to portray a writer, be he philosopher, or mystic, or polemist, through his own words by quoting long excerpts. This is in a way very praiseworthy, but it should be preceded by a general systematic characterization of the views, and the quotations should be used as illustrations, for otherwise confusion ensues. The discussion of the *Zohar* and the entire mystic system taught in it occupy less space than that of a single representative of Kabbala, the above-mentioned Abulafia.

Besides mysticism in its various expressions there are also treated extensively belles-lettres in its different aspects, ethical and pietistic literature, and philosophy. In regard to the latter, though, there is a difference between the treatment of the earlier thinkers and the post-Maimonidean philosophers. For reasons unknown, Saadia and Bahya are treated in an entirely too brief a manner. Of the former's discussion of the important Jewish problems hardly anything is said and only a few sentences of his preface are quoted, and in a similar, though somewhat longer manner, are Bahya's views, both philosophical and ethical, dispensed with. Ha-Levi fares better, but the main kernel in his na-

tional philosophy, the endowment of the Jewish group with *Segulah* i.e., with divine intuition (Inyan Elohi), for religiosity and morality is left out. As a result he misconstrues the simile of the philosopher who compares the position of the Jews among the nations to the position of the heart in the body to mean that the Jews feel more than all the other nations. The case is not so; the Jews are compared to the heart on account of the *Segulah* which enables them to distribute spiritual and religious currents to the nations as the heart distributes blood. He also errs in forcing upon Gabirol the conception of the *Ten Sefirot* which term is not mentioned in any of his works.

The philosophy of Maimonides is treated extensively and in a systematic way though he omits some of its important phases. The philosophies of the late thinkers, such as Crescas, Gersonides, and even of minor currents of reflection, such as those of Albalog, Aldabi, and others are given in detail, though never in a comprehensive manner, for some phases are omitted while others are treated at unnecessary length. A number of these defects and shortcomings disappear in the volumes which treat of the literature of the Modern Period; the excerpts are not so lengthy, and the presentation becomes more concentrated and systematic.

That these shortcomings do not impair the value of the work to a large degree goes without saying, for the excellencies pointed out above overbalance them. To these should be added the supplements to each volume which contain excerpts from rare manuscripts or discussions upon literary problems. The fine style of the work enhances its importance. As a whole Zinberg's *Geschichte* is a distinct contribution to Jewish literature in general and to Yiddish literature in particular.

Of shorter works on literary history which deal with a period or a particular branch of Jewish literature there are to be mentioned Israel Abrahams' *Short Chapters on Mediaeval Hebrew Literature*; J. L. Landau's *Short Lectures on Modern Hebrew Literature*; and M. Weinreich's *Bilder fun der Yiddisher Literatur Geshichte*.

i. The first is a general survey of the Medieval literature in its several aspects, noting the chief characteristics of each branch. It also contains a number of extracts from outstanding works which serve as illustrations for the reader of the quality of the books discussed.

ii. Landau's work is of a limited scope, and consequently the treatment of the material is of a comparatively comprehensive nature. Though its title speaks of modern Hebrew Literature, in reality it

deals with only a small part of it. Its first edition, published in 1923, embraced the history of Hebrew literature of the first Haskalah period only, with the addition of a chapter on Isaac Samuel Reggio and Samuel David Luzzatto, the two Italian scholars and writers. In the second edition published in 1938, the author added a third chapter on the Galician school of writers in which he discusses Naḥman Isaac Fishman. The method is the monographic one; a section is devoted to each writer, scholar, poet, or dramatist of note in which the life, activity, and evaluation of his literary contributions are given. The monographs are permeated with a spirit of enthusiasm for the early workers in the field of modern Hebrew literature who overcame all obstacles in their struggle for expression. Of special value are the sections on the dramatist, Joseph Efrati, the historian and poet, Solomon Löwisohn, the poet, Solomon Cohen, the scholar and thinker, S. I. Reggio, and Naḥman I. Fishman. As regards the latter, he was unfortunately omitted by all historians of early modern Hebrew literature and it is to the credit of Landau that he recorded the life and struggles of a forgotten Galician poet. As a whole, Landau's work offers a comprehensive and interesting survey of the first stage in the development of modern Hebrew literature.

iii. Weinreich's sketches of Yiddish literary history really contain more than its title connotes, for the work gives a connected history of a great part of Yiddish literature from very early times to Mendele, though the various aspects are presented as separate essays. Beginning with a survey on the history of the Yiddish language in which the author traces its origin to the twelfth century and follows up its metamorphoses, he proceeds to describe the various collections of Judaeo-German or of older Yiddish books from important libraries of Europe. He then turns to present in a number of essays the leading strata of Mediaeval Yiddish literature. Of these, greater attention is paid by the historian to the secular literary phase than to the religious. The early romances, poems, tales, and especially the novels and stories of Elijah Levita (Vol. II, Sec. 165) are described in detail and the content and character analyzed. Considerable space is devoted by the historian to the period of transition from the Mediaeval to the modern, wherein he notes the steps of progress made by Yiddish during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the first half of the nineteenth, as well as to the various influences exerted upon that literature by such movements as Hassidism and Haskalah. The work concludes with several

essays on Solomon Ettinger (Sec. 62) and Isaac Meir Dick (Sec. 62), the outstanding writers of the early nineteenth century Yiddish literature, and on the first stage in Mendele's literary creativeness. The essays on the various themes are comprehensive and display mastery of the field and much research in original sources including a number of works which are still in manuscripts. The author, who belongs to that group of Jewish intellectuals known as Yiddishists who endeavor to raise Yiddish to the status of a national language, often exaggerates the role the Judaeo-German literature played in the life of the Jews of the German-Polish center during a half a millennium. However, this tendency by no means detracts from the value of the work as a contribution to Jewish literary history. This value is considerably increased by the numerous lengthy excerpts from older books which illustrate the steps through which the Yiddish language has passed.

III. FOLKLORE

During the period several writers turned their attention to Jewish folklore of the Modern Period, especially to its humorous phase. As a result we have several collections of anecdotes, witty sayings, and bon mots which circulated orally among the Jews of Eastern Europe, classified and arranged in a logical and systematic order. Notable among these are the *Sefer ha-Bediḥah we-ha-Ḥidud* (The Book of Humor and Wit) by A. Druyanow (Sec. 42) and the *mi Dor le-Dor* (From Generation to Generation) by M. Lipson. The first is a three-volume work containing three thousand and seventy-one anecdotes and witty sayings, reflecting all phases of Jewish life during the last century and a half. The great majority of these anecdotes are anonymous, but a large number of them are attributed to their authors who hail from all strata of Jewry, from Ḥassidic *Zaddikim* and famous Rabbinic scholars to Jewish commissars in Soviet Russia. The material which was collected by the author during twenty-nine years is arranged according to several methods: phases of Jewish life, classes of persons, modern movements, great events in the last period of Jewish history, and similar devices of differentiation.

The value of the work is exceedingly great, for as the author remarks in his preface, "The folk anecdote not only amuses us but affords us a glimpse into the recesses of the soul of the people." This large collection of wit and humor mirrors the life of the East-European Jewries in its manifold in the truest manner. There is hardly an aspect missing

The attitude of the people in all moods, whether in sorrow or joy, despair or hope, naïveté or critical keenness, towards all types of events is reflected in thousands of expressions of Jewish wit.

Of special interest is the collection of anecdotes, centering around the Soviet regime, which are distinguished by brilliancy and mental keenness. We will cite one, the barb of which is as sharp today as when it was uttered. It runs as follows. A Caucasian who visited Moscow told his friend of a wonderful troupe of Grusinian actors in the Tiflis theater, that as soon as they appear on the stage and open their mouths to speak, the audience immediately begins to sob. A Jew, who heard the story icily remarked, "Small wonder! We have in Moscow only one Grusinian actor (Stalin) and when he appears on the stage and opens his mouth to speak, all Russia cries."

The value of the work is greatly enhanced by its flowing Hebrew style and by the notes at the end of the volumes which cite parallels to numerous anecdotes and stories from the stores of humor of other nations.

Lipson's collection is more limited in scope both quantitatively and qualitatively; not only does the collection contain a smaller number of stories, but their character also differs from those of Druyanow. They deal with a limited number of subjects, namely with phases of the religious life. There are no anonymous anecdotes, but all bear the names of the authors most of whom were Rabbis and religious leaders. This very limitation, however, has its advantage, for the stories reveal to us not only the sense of humor of generations of Rabbis, scholars, and *Zaddikim* but also illuminate such corners of Jewish life which are rarely reflected in literature.

112. GEOGRAPHY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND BOOKS OF TRAVEL

The works on geography center mainly around Palestine. The national movement and the ultimate establishment of a large Jewish center in that country, as well as the founding of the Hebrew University concentrated the attention of Jewish scholars upon that branch of Jewish learning, both in its modern and in its historical phase as well as on the kindred branch of archaeology. Numerous articles and essays were written on the subject by various writers in many periodicals, especially in the thirteen volumes of the annual, *Yerushalayyim*, published and edited in the years 1882-1920 by A. M. Lunz, which were devoted to the historical and geographical studies of Palestine,

and in the later similar publications of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society issued since that year. The number of special works in the field is not large, but most of them are of importance.

i. Of the works dealing primarily with geography in its wider sense, there is to be noted the *ha-Areẓ* (The Land) by A. J. Braver (1884) who devoted himself to that particular study. As the subtitle states, it intends to give a comprehensive knowledge of the country and includes, besides chapters dealing in detail with subjects which belong to geography proper, such as the general geological structure of the land and its various parts, the topography, the climate, flora and fauna, also many other subjects. Palestine to the author means the land in its historical connotation and embraces both parts, the Western and the Eastern, and accordingly he gives a description of both. Of the other subjects he gives in two chapters a succinct account of the population of the land from the days of primitive man to the year 1926, an extensive survey of the economic and commercial geography dealing with the natural resources of the land and their exploitation, the state of commerce and its methods, modes of transportation, and exports and imports. Many data have become, due to the industrial and commercial progress since the year 1926, obsolete, but the general facts, especially those regarding history, are still of value. About a third of the book is devoted to a description of the important cities, towns, and villages of the country, as well as their environment, in which many topographical, historical, and sociological data are given. Of special interest are the surveys of the Jewish colonies and cities founded in the last sixty years, as well as the sections dealing with the Bedouins, their tribes, modes of life, and occupations. The work, as a whole, is written with scientific precision and contains a wealth of data about past and present Palestine.

ii. An important contribution to the geography of Palestine and the neighboring countries is the encyclopaedic work, *Ereẓ Yiśra'el u-Shkhenothah* by Israel Zeb Horowitz (1880-1918). Its subtitle describes the work as a geographical-historical encyclopaedia of Palestine, Syria, and the Sinai Peninsula, and the material is accordingly arranged in separate articles in alphabetical order. The author, who died in his thirty-eighth year, did not complete the work, and only the first volume, which carries the work until the letter Kof, was published. The articles deal with all geographical and ethnographical names mentioned in the entire Jewish literature from the Bible to the books of the latest travelers,

including the Apocrypha and Josephus. They furnish all possible data regarding the name of a place, or a people or a tribe, and are especially replete with historical information. We thus obtain a knowledge of the fertility of the place in olden times, the types of fruits it produced, the local customs, the scholars who resided in it during the generations, and of all other historical events that transpired within the place or near it, whether of a military, political, or economic nature. The author made use also of the extensive Palestinian literature in the European languages and quotes frequently from such works. Some articles, such as *Hebron*, *Tiberias*, and several others are veritable short monographs on the subjects, for not only do they contain all geographical, topographical, and historical data, but also include a number of legends centered around certain episodes in the history of the Jewish communities of these places. The value of the work is greatly enhanced by the long notes appended to each article, in which many historical and topographical problems are discussed in a scholarly and learned manner, though from an extreme conservative point of view which is often uncritical. The articles, *Yerushalayyim* and *Erez Yisrael*, are omitted from this volume on account of the wide scope the author proposed for these articles; the first was extended into a fair-sized volume which is still in manuscript, and the second was not completed.

iii. The period under discussion offers, on the whole, very few books of travel, for the modern conditions of colonization, transportation, and the speedy spread of information left little for the Jewish traveler to reveal. However, there is one book of travel which possesses exceptional interest and contains a wealth of information about Jewish life in a part of the world, which curiously enough, though its coast is separated from Europe only by a few days journey on the Mediterranean, the interior remains even today a terra incognita in many aspects. This work is *Travels in North Africa* by Naḥum Slouschz (1873). The author, who devoted himself for many years to the exploration of the remains of the Phoenician civilization in Northern Africa and to the history and antiquity of the life of the Jews in the several countries situated there, made a number of journeys through that region between the years 1906 and 1914, and visited Tripoli and its surrounding oases, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco. On these visits he penetrated into the most distant points and secluded corners of the countries and acquainted himself with the life of groups of Jews scattered on the oases of the Sahara amidst a semi-savage population of

Berber and Arab tribes. The rich material gathered by him on these journeys is summarized for us in the book which is divided into five parts.

The first part is devoted to the Jews of Tripoli and the adjoining country, ancient Cyrenaica. The narrative is concentrated primarily on the Jewish settlements which are far from the coast, for it is these which retained their pristine and original mode of life. In fact, the Jews of that region, according to the author, constitute a distinct Jewish type because of their Palestinian origin. As is well known, Cyrenaica and the adjoining province of Lybia contained, during the two centuries preceding the Christian Era and the century following it, an exceptionally large Jewish population—so large that in their revolt in 116 C.E. against the Romans, they not only successfully resisted for a long time the Roman armies, but, according to the testimony of the writers of the period, killed about a quarter of a million Greeks and Romans. After they were finally reduced, their settlements were destroyed, but the remnants fled to the interior of Africa and mingled with the native Bedouins upon whom they exerted a great influence, and a number of tribes even embraced Judaism. As a result, Jewish settlements are found in all the oases of the Sahara, and traces of Jewish influence and evidence of their large number in the days before the advance of Islam and the Arabs, are numerous. The conquering Arabs forced many Jews and Judaized Berbers to embrace their religion, but the former faith has not been obliterated even today. Many Berber tribes still retain Jewish customs and even remember their Jewish origin. The author tells us that the entire country of Tripoli and the surrounding oases are replete with ancient Jewish cemeteries, ruins of cities and synagogues which are so designated by the natives. The scattered Jewish communities on the border of the Sahara live their isolated life amidst the native population which is distinguished by many peculiarities. Among the chapters of special interest is the one describing the functions of the Palestinian *Sheluhim*, that is scholars sent out by the Jews of Jerusalem as agents to collect money for the charitable institutions. These penetrated to the most distant corners of the world and also visited the African Jewish settlements, where they served as links connecting them with the rest of the Jewish world. They were not only revered but considered as saints, and the author tells us of several tombs of such *Sheluhim* which are considered holy places not only by the Jews but also by the Berbers. Of interest is also the chapter on the

Jewish merchants of the Sahara where the commerce conducted by them by means of caravans is described.

The second part, devoted to the Jews of the *Gebel* or the settlements in the mountainous regions of the desert, is of exceptional interest. It tells of Jewish cave-dwellers, namely, of settlements of Jews which are situated underground. In these descriptions, glimpses of a peculiar life pass before us in colorful array. We are informed that the present settlements are the remnant of a large Jewish population which occupied and even dominated the mountains. To this fact both the traditions of the Jews as well as of the natives bear evidence. Not all the Jews of the *Gebel* live underground; a number of them live in villages above ground. The whole region is strewn with Jewish ruins which testify to the existence of large numbers in ancient times.

The interior of the country of Tunis described in the third part is especially rich in Jewish remains, for it is the country of ancient Carthage, colonized by the Phoenician Semites, the Canaanites of Palestine; Hebrew was spoken there. Slouschz believes that there were many Jews who joined the Phoenicians in their settlements. There was a large number of Jews in this country in early Mediaeval Ages, for the traditions of the country even tell of a Jewish queen called the Cahena, i.e. priestess, who ruled parts of Tunis and Algeria. Of the present Jewish settlements, the traveler found those on the island of Jerba most interesting. There are two villages there, one consisting entirely of Kohanim, descendants of priests, and the other solely of Israelites, without a Kohen or Levite among them.

In the fourth part, the Jews of Algeria, mainly of the region bordering the desert, are portrayed. We are introduced to Jewish nomads, who for centuries have lived in tents like the Berbers. Their number has considerably decreased, but there are still small settlements of such Jews.

The fifth part portrays Jewish life in central Morocco and the Atlas region. Here too there is an element of ancient Jews, though the larger part consists of Spanish Jews who had settled there after the massacre of 1391 and the Expulsion in 1492. It is the life of the native Jews which is of special interest. It is distinguished by many peculiarities. In the city of Debke, in the Atlas mountains, the Jews are divided, as in the island of Jerba, into two large classes, Kohanim and Israelites. The Kohanim form a separate community. Besides Debke there are vivid descriptions of many other scattered Jewish settlements in the

Atlas ranges which, up to the time of Slouschz, were not visited by any other traveler.

The book contains accounts of the manners and customs, superstitions, and beliefs of the Jews scattered throughout the interior of Northern Africa on the edge of the Sahara. Of these we may note a few. The separation between priests and Israelites and the absence of Levites among them is a remarkable feature of these Jewries. Of the peculiar ceremonies concentrated about the holidays, we may mention the custom of the Jews of the interior of Tripoli, who do not admit any strangers into their homes on the first two days of Passover and both days of New Years, a custom observed with rigor no matter how respected and revered the guest may be. Another custom widely spread through all African Jewries, the like of which is not found anywhere else, is the placing on the first evening of Passover of a live fish on a plate and turning it about the heads of those present and saying: "We have gone forth in hosts from Egypt."

Of the numerous legends and traditions, the most peculiar is the one that persists in the mountainous regions on the borders of Algeria and Morocco that Joshua ben Nun, who succeeded Moses as leader of the Jews, died there. They even show his grave which is holy both to Jews and Moslems. The tradition has its origin in ancient literature, for Procopius, a Byzantine writer of the sixth century, tells of an African inscription which read, "We are those that fled before Joshua, the son of Nun, the brigand." Reference to the migration of one of the nations of Palestine to Africa at the time the Jews arrived, are also found in the Talmud. In general, numerous legends persist among the Berbers as to their descent from the Philistines and other neighboring nations of the ancient Jews. These are some of the features of the unique world delineated for us by the traveler.

113. BIOGRAPHY

i. The prolific literary productivity which distinguished the period under discussion is also noted in the field of biography. This time, however, the scholars concentrated more on the lives and activities of outstanding men of the Modern Period, though those of earlier generations were not entirely neglected. Due to the revival of Hebrew and the great expansion of its literature during the last half century, many of these biographical books were written in that language. Of these

the important ones are: biographies of the founder of Ḥassidism, Israel Ba'al Shem Tob (Besht); of the Kabbalistic poet who opens the period of modern Hebrew literature, Moses Ḥayyim Luzzatto, written by Abraham Kahana; of Yom Tob Lippman (Leopold) Zunz and Zechariah Frankel (Vol. III, Secs. 73, 76), leaders and founders of modern Jewish learning by S. P. Rabinowitz; and of S. J. Rapoport and Michael Sachs, two other leaders in the same field; of the political champion for Jewish emancipation in Germany during the first half of the last century, Gabriel Riesser by S. Bernfeld, and of Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Börne, by Eleazar Schulman. Of biographies of distinguished men of earlier times there are to be noted those of Joseph of Rosshelm, a leader of German Jewry in the first half of the fifteenth century and their representative at the court of Charles the Fifth, of Maimonides by David Yellin, and of Rashi by A. M. Lifschitz (1879).

These biographies describe not only the lives of the chosen men but also portray the environment in which they grew up and developed and the influence it exerted upon the personality of these leaders and scholars, and also contain a survey of their views and teachings as well as an appreciation of their works. Of special merit are the biographies of Zunz and Frankel by Rabinowitz and of Rashi by Lifschitz. The former analyzes in detail the contents of all the works of these scholars, summarizes the important theories, and at times even defends them against criticism, or, on the contrary, points out their shortcomings. In addition he gives also succinct accounts of the life and works of other distinguished men of the time with whom these two came in contact as well as of the currents of thought and movements which swayed that generation, so that as a result we have a comprehensive view of the entire period with the two scholars as the central figures. Lifschitz does the same thing for Rashi even on a larger scale. Not only does he devote several chapters to an historical sketch of the life of the Jews in the Franco-German center in the eleventh century, dwelling especially on the literary activities of Rabbi Gershom (Vol. I, Sec. 141) and his disciples, the teachers of Rashi, but also analyzes in detail the methods employed by Rashi in his commentaries on the Bible and Talmud, and describes the nature and character of these commentaries as well as their style and diction. He also sketches the influence of Rashi upon the learning of generations. As a result, the portrait of this commentator and his personality appear

in its full glory and worth. The biography of Lifschitz is probably the best of all the attempts hitherto made to describe Rashi in his multifarious intellectual and spiritual activities.

ii. To these biographies we must add Horodetzki's collection of shorter biographies or portraits of the personalities of leaders of Rabbinic scholars, entitled *le-Korot ha-Rabbanut* (Sketches of the History of Rabbinism). In these biographical essays, the author depicts the lives and activities of such Rabbinic scholars as Isaac Abohab, the author of the *Menorat ha-Maor* (Lamp of Illumination, Vol. II, Sec. 88); Joseph Kolon, the great Italian Rabbinic scholar of the fifteenth century; of Moses Isserlis, Solomon Luria, Mordecai Yaffe, Samuel Edels, Meir of Lublin, the leading Polish scholars of the sixteenth century; Meir Schiff of Frankfort, Germany, and several others. Only few data are given on the life of Abohab, for Horodetzki, following Zunz, considers the author of the *Menorat ha-Maor* to have been the earlier scholar bearing that name who lived in the thirteenth century and of his life little is known. We have already stated above (Vol. II, Sec. 88) that this view is erroneous. However, the spiritual portrait of the author whoever he may be, as reflected in the remarkable book, is well drawn. Of more value are the biographies of the Polish scholars, since little was written about them in the earlier literature, and of these, especially distinguished are the sketches of Isserlis and Luria. Horodetzki was the first who pointed out the liberal phase of Isserlis' character in spite of his severity in legal decisions. He was the target of many *Maskilim* in their struggle for religious reforms, but the biographer portrays him as a man of liberal views, a thinker and historian, and that his legal severity was mainly due to the influence of his environment. Luria's stern personality, his love of truth, and his contribution to textual correctness of the Talmud are equally well described, and similarly are the portraits of the other scholars clearly delineated. These essays, as a whole, form an important contribution to the history of Rabbinic literature as well as to Jewish biography.

iii. Of the biographical works written in English, there are to be noted Yellin's and Abrahams' *Maimonides*, Bentwich's *Philo Judaeus* and *Josephus*, and Cecil Roth's *Menasseh ben Israel*.

The first is popular in nature and gives a fair account of the life and works of this great Jewish thinker. The works of Bentwich are of greater importance inasmuch as they represent the first attempt to deal with the only known Jewish philosopher and the only Jewish historian

of ancient times from the Jewish point of view. Both Philo and Josephus were subjects of great interest to non-Jewish scholars for many years and an extensive literature has grown up about their works. It is true that several Jewish scholars treated certain phases of Philo's or Josephus' views and works, but there was no complete biography written with a Jewish approach. Bentwich devotes the first two chapters of his biography of Philo to the Jewish community in Alexandria and to the life of the philosopher, while the bulk of the book deals with his works and method surveying his philosophy and theology and analyzing his relation to Jewish tradition. The author's attitude toward his subject is deeply sympathetic and in his chapter on Philo's relation to Jewish tradition he emphasizes more his correspondence with it than his deviation from it. He gives a fair and comprehensive statement of the points of contact between the teachings of Philo, the Agada, and certain other phases of Jewish literature. He even believes that Philo's religious message has not lost its force even today, for in its stress upon the inward meaning of the law, while simultaneously advocating the observance of its precepts, it can serve as a guiding principle also to the modern Jews in their attitude towards Judaism. However, this view, interesting as it may appear, is of little relevance. The gravity of the religious problem presented to many modern Jews does not lie in the lack of a formula of reconciliation between the spirit and the letter of the law, but in the determination of the nature and content of that spirit, and for these the message of Philo is of little avail.

Josephus does not fare so well at the hands of the biographer. Throughout the work the attitude is critical both towards Josephus as a man and as an historian. The greater part of the book is devoted, as in the preceding one, to an analysis of the historical works of Josephus which is carried out with keenness and thoroughness. His conclusion that Josephus' fame as an historian is greatly exaggerated—for he very frequently followed his sources blindly without testing their truthfulness—is justified to a degree but not wholly. On a number of occasions Bentwich is too strict with his subject and not only does he apply to him modern standards of historiography, but the interpretation placed by him on certain passages of the ancient historian are not quite correct.¹² The work as a whole, though, gives a comprehensive account of the man and his literary activity.

¹² Cf. for instance his interpretation of Josephus' statement regarding the domestic troubles of Herod, or of the speech of the Pharisees exhorting the people to take down the golden eagle set up by the king on the Temple, pp. 113, 114.

114. AUTOBIOGRAPHIES AND MEMOIRS

The phases of Jewish literature hitherto considered reflect Jewish life in the distant or near past in a greater or lesser degree, but none of these mirror it in as strong a measure as that species of literature known as autobiography and memoirs of which there are numerous works in this period. Most of these were written in the last two decades after the changes in Jewish life due to the World War took place in Jewry, especially in that of the great center formerly known as the Russian Empire which up to 1918 contained more than half the number of Jews of the world. It is fortunate that their writing was not delayed for they still retain the glow of the life of that Jewry before it began to fade from memory; a life which was unique in many ways and a source of strength to world Jewry, and the fountain-head of many currents of Jewish thought and movements. These books were written by men who not only were themselves saturated with the spirit of that life, but were active participants in its shaping and moulding, and hence their value; for no one can understand the later phase of modern Jewish history without having a glimpse of the inner life of Russian Jewry in the near past, its bitter struggle for existence under the Czarist regime, its adjustment to conditions, and its devotion to Judaism, learning, and Jewish culture. That all was not bright from the spiritual angle in the life of that Jewry, and that there were deep shadows, goes without saying; even the darker spots are reflected in these books, which increases their value.

i. We will select for discussion the most outstanding works of this branch of literature, the first of which in importance and interest is the *Zikronot* (Memoirs) by Jacob Maseh, (1860-1923). The work, in four parts, is only autobiographical in form, inasmuch as the writer tells of many incidents of his personal experiences, but not in content, as most of the episodes described there do not deal with the personal life of the author except in the first part where the personal element predominates. The value of the book is due entirely to the remarkable personality of the author, a rare type which only Russian Jewry could have produced. He combined in himself numerous characteristics and qualities of the highest order. He was at one and the same time a Talmudic scholar in the full sense of the word, a master of Jewish literature, a brilliant jurist, having graduated from the Moscow University Law School with distinction, and the spiritual leader for thirty

years of the most important Jewish community in Russia, that of Moscow, which in a number of respects exceeded in importance even that of St. Petersburg, the capital, and above all, he was endowed with a heart which responded to all suffering. He left an impress upon the entire Jewish life of Russia for there was not a phase in which he did not participate. As the official Rabbi of Moscow he was in close touch both with the richest Jews of the Empire and with the high government officials, and possessed great influence in both circles, which influence he utilized to alleviate the misery of his brethren whoever they were, whether communities in the Pale of Settlement, or itinerant Rabbis, or Jews who had no right of residence in Moscow, or the lowly grizzled ex-soldiers of the time of Nicholas I who remained loyal to their religion in spite of all attempts to convert them. It is only a part of the numerous experiences of the multi-phased activities of the writer which are recorded in the book. But even this part reflects Jewish life in Russia in all its tragedy, idealism, and strength of spirit.

The Memoirs cover four periods in Jewish life: life in the sixties of the last century as it was lived in White Russia in the Pale, life in Moscow outside the Pale before the expulsion of the Jews in 1892; life in that city from that year to the Revolution; and Jewish life in the city under the régime of the Soviets in its early years.

The author was born in Mohilew, White Russia, where he was educated and where he resided until his fourteenth year. He then left for Kertch, in the Crimea, where he attended the gymnasium until 1882, his twenty-second year. In that year he entered the Law School at the Moscow University from which he graduated in 1888, and after practicing for a number of years as advocate he was elected in 1893 as the official Rabbi of the community. He thus resided in Moscow for forty years. It is the memoirs of this period of his life which are of gripping human interest, and the incidents they relate are so touching that involuntarily we are swept along with the author and live his life over with him. A few instances will illustrate the intensity of interest which the episodes possess. On one occasion, Maseh was invited by the poet, Dolitzki, (Sec. 27), who resided in Moscow nominally as a clerk of the rich merchant, Wisotsky, while in reality he supported himself by giving Hebrew lessons, in order to pronounce judgment on an article written by a young man who was hiding in his house. The article was read, judgment was pronounced, and the host and his guests partook of a feast the main dish of which was a herring prepared with vinegar and

onions. In the midst of the feast, a loud knock was heard and Dolitzki hid the young man under a large empty barrel. The police entered in search of illegitimate Jewish residents and after searching every nook of the house, they crashed the barrel and found the trembling young man who had fainted from fear. Maseh was so touched by the scene that he told the police officer that he, too, had no right of residence and was dragged along with fifty other Jews to the police office in order to experience the misery of his brethren. When his identity was discovered he was, of course, freed. On another occasion, we are told how he outwitted the Grand Duke, Sergey, the Governor General of Moscow, who, as a punishment for the offense of a Jewish soldier whom he discovered wearing *Zizit*, ordered that all Jewish soldiers be kept in the barracks the entire week of Passover, so that they be forced to eat *Homez*. Maseh circumvented his order with the help of the highest military officials by arranging the celebration of the Passover in the barracks proper with pomp and ceremony and even established a regular synagogue service in one of the offices.

Of special human interest are the stories of the lives of the veteran soldiers of Nicholas I, whose devotion to Judaism, for which they suffered, arouses our admiration, for its simplicity and purity of heart. One of them was especially careful about his observance of putting on phylacteries for the following reason. When he was a soldier he had served for a time as assistant cook in the establishment of Zakrowsky, the Governor General of Moscow, a hard and merciless man. Once, he was suddenly called to the presence of the general while he was in the midst of prayer. In haste he removed only the phylactery from his head but not the one on his arm. When he came before the general the phylactery slipped off. Zakrowsky asked for an explanation and when told that the soldier had removed the phylacteries because he feared him, he ordered that twenty-five lashes be given him for fearing a man more than his God. He later gave him as a reward twenty-five roubles and he became his favorite. Henceforth the soldier put on his phylacteries punctiliously every morning.

In the *Memoirs* there pass before us portraits of many leading Jews of Russia one of which we will note, that of the well known Kalman Zeb Wisotzky, the tea merchant, who was distinguished by his numerous contributions and who left a perpetual fund for the Jewish people, which went the way of all Jewish funds since the Revolution. Wisotzky, who was a disciple of the saintly Israel Salanater, led a re-

markable life. In spite of his riches, he seldom traveled in a carriage but walked to his business or any other place within the city; he gave a tithe of his income and capital regularly, and worked daily in his tea factory until the day of his death, for he had been taught by his teacher that a man must live by the work of his own hands. In the early years of his life, when the military system of Nicholas I was in practice and Jewish children were turned over for service in their youth, he used to visit the barracks, gather the young soldiers, teach them the prayers and the elementary laws, and encourage them in their struggle for the sake of Judaism, and on Passover he even celebrated the *Seder* in the barracks. He thus saved a generation of Jews from conversion. Of such spiritual stuff were some Jewish capitalists in Russia made, and he was by no means an exception. Many of the episodes also display the humanity of the Russian officials whom the bureaucracy instructed to carry out its merciless decrees against the Jews. Thus we read of how the chief of police of Moscow allowed a Jew to stay two weeks in the city illegitimately in order to search the monasteries for his renegade daughter and bring her back to her faith, an act which was against the law and against his religion. Such glimpses of the inner aspects of Jewish life which reveal to us its strength and depth are offered to us in almost every episode related in the remarkable book.

ii. Not less interesting are two works of S. L. Zitron entitled *Awek fun Folk* (Away from the People) and *Stadlanim* (Agents of the People). The first, which is a collection of essays first published in various Yiddish periodicals under the name of *Meshumadim* (Converts), portrays the lives and activities of a number of famous Jewish converts in Russia during the nineteenth century. The portraits are drawn only partly from personal experience, for the author knew a number of these converts, but a large part of the material is derived from reminiscences of the friends and colleagues of these renegades, or autobiographical data in their own writings. As a result, the work possesses the character of memoir literature though it cannot be strictly construed as such.

The work in its three parts contains the biographies of twenty-eight converts who, with few exceptions, were men of great talent and learning, and who made their mark in various branches of scholarship, science, and art. The lives of these apostates reflect the tragedy of Russian Jewry of the near past in the most lucid manner, not only by the fact that their conversion represented a distinct loss of intellect and

talent to a social group which needed all that its best sons could give to it, but by the peculiar circumstances which brought about these conversions. With the exception of the apostates, the notorious Brafman and Asher Temkin who took that step as a means of revenge upon their brethren for wrongs done to them, and two or three more who embraced Christianity as a result of love affairs, the majority of these converts were driven to their apostasy by the cruel treatment of the government which closed for the Jew every way of advancement, whether in education, literature, or commerce. The boon which most of the converts sought to attain by making this great sacrifice was the right of residence beyond the Pale of Settlement, and for this elemental human right denied only to Jews, brilliant minds had to forsake their people and faith. But the greater aspect of the tragedy is revealed to us in their struggles and sufferings after the conversion. With the exception of those mentioned above, these converts paid dearly for their rash act. The portraits of Zitron reveal glimpses of suffering souls whose lives were embittered by pangs of remorse and were filled with heroic efforts to atone for their sin.

As a result the work is replete with episodes which are simultaneously tragic and humorous. We read here of the convert Susman who after his apostasy became censor of Jewish books, and while censoring the *Yoré Deah*, one of the four parts of the *Shulhan Aruk*, added his own notations to the book and published them along with the text and standard commentaries anonymously. The same Susman became a habitual drunkard as a result of his remorse, but curiously enough he used to cross himself before drinking his glass of *wodka*, in order, as he often explained, to prove that Jews are no drunkards. Another convert, Sorkin, spent his entire fortune which he amassed after his apostasy on publishing books in defense of Jews and Judaism and died impoverished. A third convert, the talented novelist and short story writer, Pruzhansky, tells us that he embraced Christianity only after a week of wandering at night in the parks of the city because he had no right of residence in the capital, St. Petersburg, and that his first act on the morrow after his conversion was to rush to a synagogue and pour his heart out in fervent prayer before the God of Israel. The convert Constantin Shapiro, who, as we have seen above, became after his apostasy a distinguished Hebrew poet, used to arrange Sedarim every Passover, in which all the participants were the new Marranos of Russia. The convert, Israel Isser Landau, who in his youth was an ardent

Ḥassid and later became a censor of Jewish books, remained a devotee of Ḥassidism all his life, insisting that his Jewish friends address him by the name of Rabbi Yisrael instead of the Christian name given to him, and utilized his censorial power to strike out every derogatory passage or phrase against Ḥassidism from the articles of Hebrew writers. He was especially severe with Smolenskin and once refused to permit the printing of an article where this famous writer was called a prophet. "Nay," argued Landau, "to call the arch enemy of Ḥassidism a prophet is sacrilegious," and passed the article only after all laudatory remarks in reference to Smolenskin were deleted.

Such were the conflicts, struggles, and contradictions which took place in the torn and shattered souls of men of talent and learning who in moments of weakness forsook the faith of their fathers, but who with all their efforts could not escape Judaism which clung to them until their last day. Even Lew Kopernik, the famous jurist, whose conversion was the result of a love affair and who, when he informed his father of the act in a Hebrew letter, was reprimanded by the latter for his poor orthography but not for apostasy, did not bear his role lightly, but regretted it all his life.

The second work, *Stadlanim*, passes before us a gallery of portraits of Jewish leaders who acted as representatives of their people before the Russian government endeavoring to avert persecutions and discriminations. The series of portraits of such leaders covers Jewish life in Russia for over a century, beginning with Leib Meites who represented his brethren in the court of the last Polish king in the third quarter of the eighteenth century and ending with Baron Horace Günzburg, the leader of that Jewry, at the end of the nineteenth century. These biographies reflect not only the tragedy of the life of that Jewry, its constant struggles against a malicious bureaucratic government which continuously planned how to circumscribe its activities, impede its progress, and prevent free development, but also reveals the dignity of that Jewry, its inner worth, its consciousness of self respect, and the spiritual environment which made possible the rise of such illustrious leaders.

The *Stadlan* is a well known type in Jewish history. From time immemorial, in every generation, in almost every portion of scattered Jewry there were always men who acted as mediators between their brethren and the government of the land in which they resided. It was due to the devotion and self-sacrifice of these men that whole Jewries were often saved from massacres, exiles, and from humiliating decrees.

These men were seldom elected by popular acclaim. Like Mordecai of the Book of Esther, they rose to eminence by their intellectuality, wisdom, tact, and devotion to their people. They were representatives of their people not by virtue of the votes cast for them, but by the fact that they embodied in their own personalities the best qualities their people possessed. The *Stadlanim* depicted in Zitron's work almost all approached this illustrious type of Jewish leader. With few exceptions, they were distinguished Talmudists, men of deep piety, and of unimpeachable moral character. Wealth and worldly knowledge alone did not entitle one to leadership; only when added to the qualities enumerated, they made one worthy of being a *Stadlan*.

There pass before us in the book the glorious portraits of such representatives, to mention only the most illustrious, as Joshua Zeitlin, David Luria, Jacob Barit, and in more modern times, the Barons, Yusel and Horace Günzburg, and many others. Zeitlin who gained much wealth by his extensive business undertakings used his wealth for the promotion of learning as well as for the defense of his brethren. Like Samuel ha-Nagid of Spain, he was a patron of the sciences, and at his estate, Ustia, he maintained at his expense a private academy of scholars, each of whom devoted himself to a special branch of learning. Some wrote Talmudic treatises, others translated mathematical works into Hebrew, and one, a physician, even established a chemical laboratory. He himself was simultaneously a friend of Potemkin, the conqueror of Southern Russia in the days of Empress Catherine, and one of the beloved disciples of the Gaon of Wilna. When accompanying Potemkin on his journeys through cities where there were Jewish communities, Zeitlin was often compelled to write Responsa while sitting on horseback.

Luria was famous as a Talmudic scholar and composed numerous Rabbinic treatises. The piety of Barit is illustrated by the following fact. Once, when on a visit to St. Petersburg to obtain an interview with the Czar, Alexander II, he was notified on the eve of *Rosh ha-Shanah* that the interview will take place on the second day of the holiday at the king's palace in Czarskoe Selo, a distance of twenty miles from the hotel. In spite of the importance of the interview and of his advanced age—he was seventy—Barit walked to the palace and returned home in the evening.

The efforts of the two Günsburgs cover a half a century of ceaseless activity on behalf of the Jews. For the entire five decades, millions of

Jews looked by tacit agreement to the two as their defenders and protectors. Modern in their attitude and method, father and son kept a special department in their extensive offices for Jewish affairs, and spent millions gathering material and data bearing upon Jewish life in all its complicated phases. Thus the pages of Zitron's book reveal to us successively in portrait after portrait, phases of the life of an important Jewry during a whole century as reflected in the activities of a line of *Stadlanim* who were both great personalities and distinguished sons of Israel.

iii. Another angle of Russian Jewish life is revealed in the *Memoirs of Meir Berlin*, written in Yiddish and entitled *Fun Volozhin Bis Yerushalayyim* (From Volozhin to Jerusalem). These memoirs attempt to portray Jewish life as reflected in the activities of the leading Rabbis of Russia and in the circles of strict Orthodoxy. The author is a son of Naphtali Zebi Berlin (Vol. III, Sec. 110) who was the head of the famous Academy of Volozhin for forty years, and he spent his youth in the atmosphere of that Academy. Thus, for a great part of his life he was in close touch with the outstanding Rabbis of Russia, both as student and friend. For a quarter of a century he has headed the World Zionist Orthodox Organization, the Mizrachi, which again brought him in contact with numerous phases of orthodox Jewish life in Eastern and Western Europe and in Palestine. He was, therefore, well equipped to write these Memoirs. The work contains much material, numerous portraits of the personalities and characters of leading Rabbis who left their mark upon the life of Russian Jewry before the World War, and many episodes which in one way or another throw light upon phases of Jewish life hitherto not reflected in literature. Regrettably, the Memoirs were written in haste as a series of articles in a daily Yiddish paper and lack the concentration which the record of such rich experiences deserves. Of the many portraits of distinguished Rabbis, scholars, and lay orthodox leaders, those of Naphtali Zebi Berlin, father of the writer, Hayyim Soloweizik, Rabbi of Brest Litowsk, probably the greatest Rabbinic scholar during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and Isaac Jacob Reines, the founder of the Mizrachi, are the most detailed and of special interest. Interesting are also the author's reminiscences of the early days of the Zionist movement in general and of the Mizrachi in particular, as well as of the struggles of the leaders of extreme Orthodoxy in Russia and Germany against the national movement.

iv. Memoirs of exceptional importance and of deep human interest are the Diaries of Dr. Theodor Herzl, the founder and leader of political Zionism from 1896 to 1904. Their importance consists not so much in that they reveal the struggles and vicissitudes of that great movement in its incipient years, but primarily in the fact that it lays open to us some inner phases of the most remarkable and manifold personality, that of Herzl, one of the greatest men who arose in Jewry during the entire Modern Period. The rise of Zionism into a world political movement is in reality a baffling historical phenomenon which the historian can hardly explain by the ordinary method of cause and effect. No causes of a political, social, economic, or religious nature can sufficiently explain how the modest nationalistic desires of a small part of a nation, scattered throughout the world, whose dispersion was taken by all humanity as a natural phenomenon which cannot be changed, should within a few years become the concern of mighty governments who deliberated upon the return of the Jews to Palestine in a serious manner, and ultimately even attempted to realize it. The solution to this historical riddle lies to a great extent in the personality and activities of Herzl, for there is no doubt that without Herzl political Zionism would have never arisen, and if any such doubts are entertained by anyone, they will be easily dispersed by the *Diaries*, for by these Memoirs which cover the events of the leader's activity from the year 1895 to his death in 1904, we become convinced that Zionism in the first seven years of its existence was entirely a one-man movement. The Memoirs read like a romance, for they unfold before us gradually the great romantic drama which took place in the soul of Herzl, the external expression of which were his Zionist activities. The first act of this drama is contained in the first book of the *Diaries* written in the months of May and June, 1895. There is little action in it, and it is primarily psychological and reveals to us Herzl as the dreamer. Like the beginning of all great events in human history, that of the birth of the idea of the Jewish State in the mind of Herzl cannot be adequately traced. Even he himself can give no account of it. It emerged, he tells us in his first entries, suddenly. The Jewish question, the interest in which lay for a long time dormant in his subliminal consciousness, suddenly took hold of him during a conversation with the sculptor, Baer, and demanded a solution, and the solution—a Jewish State—likewise came like a flash of lightning. Great ideas always come suddenly, and also often depart suddenly, but this was not the case with

Herzl. The dream became a life dream. It possessed him and he began to develop it in all its details. For three weeks, he tells us, he wrote as if pursued by an unknown power. The outline of the State, as portrayed in its preliminary form in the Diaries and even in its later modified form in his published brochure, arouses in us amazement at his naiveté and wild imagination. Without even knowing what land he intends to obtain for the Jews, he goes on page after page elaborating the details of the State, some of which not only arouse a smile but even make us doubt the sanity of the writer. Not only does he discuss the division of labor in the State and all forms of improvement but even the uniforms of the soldiers, the regulation of duels; he also tells us that he will encourage art, industry, and military prowess by marrying off young men distinguishing themselves in these fields to rich heiresses. Nor are egoistic traits lacking in the entries, such as that his father will be the first senator and that he will be the premier. In another place he speaks of a duke who will head the State and even describes his inauguration. This office, however, he holds out as a reward to one of the Rothschilds who will help him carry out his plan. Such were the beginnings of the political Zionism conceived in fantastic dreams and interspersed with outbursts of egoism and childish naïveté. Freud would have analyzed this outline of the future Jewish State as the product of a sick mind and a symbol of inhibitions. In fact, Herzl tells us that several of his friends to whom he showed his writings and plans commiserated with him in his plight of mental aberrations. But not so the dreamer; he considered that both the outline and the brochure were written under an inspiration the power of which was unlimited. And it may be that this very simple belief was one of the factors that turned his strange Utopia into a realistic power which lifted Jewish life to greater heights.

I said one of the factors advisedly, for there were others. Dreaming was one aspect of Herzl's personality. It is the other aspects and certain circumstances which performed the miracle. It is these which constitute the succeeding acts of the grand drama unrolled before us in the entries. Herzl was much criticized in his lifetime by his opponents for his ignorance of the activities of his predecessors, of Jewish life and its conditions, and for his narrowness of conception of the Jewish problem. Curiously enough, it is these very defects which made possible at least the partial realization of his dream. He was, as he tells us himself, ignorant of all previous nationalistic attempts. Not only did he not

read Pinsker, but he did not even hear of George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, and read it only after he wrote his Jewish State. He thought himself entirely original, and spurred on by the egoistic feature in his character he undertook the impossible. He saw himself as another Moses, and as such he assumed full responsibility for the destiny of his people, saying, "I conduct the affairs of the Jews without having received a mandate from them, but nevertheless I am responsible to them." (Book I, p. 42.) When he later heard vague references to himself as another false Messiah he was more flattered by it than insulted, for he emphasized the *Messiah* and disregarded the *False*. It is this belief which gave him wings and supplied him with the energy which he displayed in his work for the sake of the cause.

Likewise he had a very poor conception of Jewish life and its conditions. He exaggerated Jewish wealth to absurdity. We are almost exasperated when we read words as follows: "What do ten billion francs amount to the Jews? Are they not richer than the French were in 1871?" He likewise naïvely believed that the rich Jews would respond immediately to his call for he thought that they really want to help their brethren, and similarly was he ignorant of the indifference of the masses to the cause of nationalism. As an aristocrat he relied first on the millionaires, but in case of their refusal, he threatened them with the revolt of the masses against them. It was blessed ignorance which acted as an incentive in his gigantic undertaking. Moreover, his exaggerated conception of Jewish wealth, which he emphasized in his letters to princes, corresponded with the notion the general world had of the Jews. Wilhelm, the Emperor of Germany, told Herzl at his audience in Jerusalem in November 1898, "You Jews have money aplenty, more than all of us." It is this very erroneous notion which was a factor in gaining a hearing for Herzl's plans by the potentates of the world, and one of the reasons why Zionist aims were taken seriously.

Again, his narrow views of the Jewish problem emphasizing the fact that the plight of the Jews is due to the animosity towards them on account of their competition, and his admission that they constitute a problem to the nations were other factors in the acceptance of Zionism by the potentates of the world, for they corresponded to their own notions. Even his remark that German will be the language of the Jewish State and the general emphasis he laid in his letters to German rulers upon the fact that the Jews will adopt the German culture, unjustified as they were, helped him in his endeavors. They gained him

the friendship of the Grand Duke of Baden who was his staunch supporter to the last, and also inclined, to a degree, the apparent favor of Wilhelm. Herzl later changed some of his views, but these very defects were at the time contributory factors in turning a mere dream into a movement and a subject of world politics.

The greatest factor, though, was his manifold personality. Herzl was undoubtedly a dreamer in the finest sense of the word, namely vision and poetic swing constituted a fundamental trait in his character, but there were many more. Of these the first was consciousness of his own worth and value. In his notes for the brochure, *The Jewish State*, which he entered in his *Diaries*, he says, "The difficult task in that State will be to find Jewish diplomats, for in exile we have lost the quality of natural straightforwardness." (B. I, p. 45.) He himself typified that quality at its best, for he was the first free Jew who approached the world without fear and demanded the solution of the Jewish problem. This explains his daring which, as described in the *Diaries*, amazes us. Unknown to Baron de Hirsch, he addressed a letter to him asking for coöperation in the carrying out of his plan, and strange as it seemed, the Baron answered and an interview was granted. At that interview, Herzl developed his Utopian plan with such earnestness that this man of the world, prince of capitalists, was impressed and promised to meet him again. In this spirit of daring which arose out of a strong belief in the justice of the cause, he writes a letter in June of 1895 to Bismarck proposing the solution of the Jewish problem as a subject for world politics. Imbued with the same spirit, he writes to Güdemann, chief Rabbi of Vienna, whom he hardly knew asking to meet him at Munich and bring a friend along in order to discuss the Jewish problem. The old scholar and leader at first demurred at such strange request but Herzl's persistence and earnestness impressed him and he yielded. Such were the first steps which Herzl took in the realization of his dream drama. They failed. Bismarck did not answer, the Baron was courteous but cool. Doubt entered the heart of the lone knight. "Perhaps," said he to himself, "my idea is after all only the result of a meglomania. But," said he again, "first of all, I must exert my will upon myself." Will and its concentration upon one thing, that is the key to the drama of which Herzl was the hero.

The *Diaries* continue to tell how his dream gradually becomes an *idée fixe* absorbing his whole being. It even suppresses his natural egoism. He offers the leadership to Baron de Hirsch, to Rothschild,

contacts people of influence, pleads, threatens, writes to the German emperor but does not find any one to deliver the letter; all is in vain, the tremendous efforts bring little success. But he persists, and after months of futile interviews with persons of influence, Herzl finally obtains a hearing by the world. The brochure, *The Jewish State*, is published in a much modified form, but the plan is still startling in its novelty and boldness. Herzl becomes a subject of discussion in leading German and European journals. "The Lovers of Zion" become interested and the first followers appear, among them Nordau; and a mystically inclined English minister, Hechler, who seeing in the dream a beginning of the fulfillment of prophetic promises, becomes the herald of Zionism in royal and princely courts and obtains for Herzl the first audience with the Grand Duke of Baden. Herzl meets the Duke, conquers his prejudices, and makes him a friend of the idea. Thus ends in May 1896 the second act of the drama. The die is cast. The lone Jewish knight becomes the head, it is true, of a small group, but still the head of an incipient world movement. Long and difficult is the way and many are the pitfalls on the road, but there is no return. A man like Herzl with such deep consciousness of his own worth and dignity cannot turn back. Nevliniski, a Polish adventurer, in the confidence of the Porte at Constantinople, proposes his services at a price. Herzl pays the price from his own pocket, and he is entrusted by the Porte with a political mission to negotiate with revolting Armenian leaders for a truce; and then he takes a step, one never heard of before in Jewish history. Without representation, without an organization behind him, and with imaginary financial resources, he goes with Nevliniski in June 1896 to the Sultan, meets his ministers and premier, and proposes with remarkable daring to buy Palestine for 20 million Turkish pounds; and when asked for particulars, he answers nonchalantly that Sir Samuel Montagu will submit a detailed financial program if the Sultan is ready to enter into negotiations. Both Herzl and his proposition make an impression, but is nonetheless refused. Instead he is entrusted by the Sultan himself with a mission to influence the European press in his favor. The dreamer thus becomes diplomat, but he still remains the dreamer. In fact he is not aware of the preposterousness of his own proposition. In an entry dated the 25th of August, two months after his visit to the Sultan, when he was asked again by the Porte to make a definite proposition he says, "I will word my plan in such a way that in case of necessity I should

be able to retract without impairing relations, for the support of financiers is very doubtful." (B. IV, p. 129.) He also makes compromises, is ready to accept autonomy for Palestine instead of buying it outright, and still later offers the Sultan a loan for the right to purchase a large tract of land in Galilee.

The *Diaries* proceed to tell the story. The ice is broken, relations with the Sultan are established; the leader is recognized by the world, but where is his army and where is his treasury? Then follow days, weeks, and months of indefatigable labor of which the entries tell the inner phase. The course is irregular—no effort is spared; interview follows interview, financier after financier is seen, plans discussed, and letters to lords and princes written. Herzl's vision embraces the entire political field; he seeks help from Germany, England, and Russia, and spins the slender thread of political relations with the Porte. Disappointment follows disappointment, financiers refuse to fill the treasury, but failures are mingled with rays of hope. The indefatigable leader founds a weekly as the organ of the movement. A call for a Congress is issued and the call is heard. Many are the obstacles in the way; the army is poorly disciplined, officers are rebellious, and there are moments when Herzl feels that he is at the end of the road, but the spirit conquers, and the Congress takes place at the end of August 1897. Herzl finally has a world organization behind him; the self-appointed representative of the Jews becomes the official spokesman of the will of the people, even if that will is weakly expressed. At the end of the first meeting of Congress, he makes the following entry, "In Basel I founded the Jewish State. A State is founded in the political will of the people; if you wish, even in the will of an individual who is sufficiently strong." A statement typically Herzlian.

What followed in the several acts of this unique drama, both of the person and of the movement in the seven years which elapsed from the first Congress to Herzl's death is of such magnitude and of such variety that we wonder at the kaleidoscopic activity and the inexhaustible energy of one man. Only a few of the outstanding events can be pointed out. Politically, Herzl's eyes roamed the world; he had audiences with German princes, twice with the Emperor, with English lords, had visited Constantinople five times and was received by the Sultan for a two-hour audience and was decorated by him with the highest order, visited the king of Italy and the Pope, and even refused, as a pious Jew, to kiss the hand of the latter in spite of established custom.

He also made numerous attempts to obtain an audience with the Czar, and when that failed, saw Von Pleve and Witte, his ministers. His financial efforts embraced the establishment of the Jewish Colonial Bank after months and months of negotiations—he himself subscribed to 1000 shares (5000 dollars), proposed plan after plan of high finance to the Sultan to buy the public debt of Turkey, offered loans and sought concessions of any kind. He once even succeeded in depositing three million francs in banks for the concessions. When all failed, and the sought-for charter or even an important foothold in Palestine was not obtained, even then his adamant will did not break. The poet, dramatist, and humorous feuilletonist became all will. As early as May 1901, he entered in his *Diaries*, five years after his first visit to Constantinople, the following item: “The world ceases to be for me a thing of beauty or imagination, but all is will.” His dream of a charter in Palestine faded for a moment, but not that of a Jewish State. For a time he considered the possibility of a settlement in El-Arish, a territory on the border of Palestine as a preliminary step in the realization of the ultimate plan. Again he journeyed, this time not to Constantinople, but to London and Cairo; once more he had frequent interviews with Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Lansdowne and with the friendly old Grand Duke of Baden who encouraged him to the last. Then came the final and tragic act in the Herzl drama, when even the plan of El-Arish failed and he turned to Uganda. Opposition arose from all sides; the leader was declared a traitor, but few knew his tragedy as revealed to us in the *Diaries*. He thus writes on the 31st of August, 1903, after the tragic strife at the Sixth Congress, “It was impossible; the final aim was not reached and will not be attained for some time, but there is an intermediate plan—Uganda. Grave is the plight of millions of Jews and we must not withhold the alleviation of the misery of the unfortunates for the sake of an ideal dream. I see the rift in our movement but there is a rift in my own soul. Originally I planned to found a Jewish State anywhere, but I became a follower of the flag of Zion. I still believe that Palestine is the only place of rest for our people but immediate help for hundreds of thousands is necessary.” Thus thought and wrote Herzl whom Zionist veterans called traitor. We may only add that the present day situation in European Jewry certainly vindicates the intuitive vision of the dead leader. In the heat of the strife, immediately after the tragic Congress, he decided to resign, and on that day he mournfully penned the words, “Through my activity I

have not impoverished Zionism but have enriched Judaism. Shalom."

This, however, was only a passing mood, the work had to go on, and in the midst of the crisis Herzl continued his work, not for Uganda but for Palestine. The following day (Sept. 1) he wrote to the good old Grand Duke, pleading once more for Germany's intercession with the Sultan. Letter after letter to Russian dignitaries for assistance in the matter were sent by him, and he even obtained information from Von Pleve that orders had been sent to the Russian ambassador in Constantinople to support his requests. Plan after plan was forwarded by him to the Porte offering loans and as a concession he asked for a foothold in Palestine. Only four months before his death in March 1904 he empowered the representative in Constantinople to enter into negotiations with the government for farming the taxes of the Acco province and offering the Ottoman treasury a loan.

To the manifoldness of his personality belongs also, as already remarked, a keen sense of practicality and realism, and this phase is like the others, reflected in the *Diaries*. There was hardly a Zionist institution founded during the years the plan of which was not first conceived by him. Long before the first Zionist Congress, he notes in the *Diaries* the necessity of a National Fund, though in a somewhat different form from the present. As early as May, 1902, Herzl proposed to the Sultan the establishment by the Jews of a university in Palestine. True, the proposition had a political coloring, but it would have been a Jewish university. As early as the spring of 1901, he thought of buying out a Mediterranean ship company in order to bring Zionism nearer to Palestine even if only by sea. At one time he suggested the founding of an insurance company against pogroms, and who knows whether such a company might not have prevented their occurrence many times. Half a year after the first Congress, after having the human material at his disposal, he notes in the *Diaries* that Zionists should administer the affairs of the communities if for no other purpose than to give positions of honor to those who deserve it and paid positions to the greedy or needy. "Unfortunately," says he, "the idea needs men in large numbers, and men are few."

Undoubtedly, the vision of the other Zionist leaders and workers was narrow, for they did not see the tragedy, which was enacted before their own eyes in the life of the founder and moving spirit of the movement. Herzl spent, as he tells us, his whole fortune on the movement, for during the early years he covered personally all expenses for trips

and offices besides the deficit of the *Welt*, and yet no one thought of reimbursing him. In all the years during which he acted as representative of the Jews in courts of kings and emperors, he made his living as a writer in the *Neue Freie Presse* and was subject to the whims of his employers as far as vacations and absences from office were concerned. Time and again he complains in his *Diaries* of his bitter fate that he must ask for a few days' leave like a clerk. To aggravate matters, he was attacked by a fatal disease a number of years before his death. Yet with all this the dreamer-realist continued on his way though he had sufficient warning that his end was not far off. Not in vain did Herzl record the words of Nevliniski, his first Cicerone in the political mazes of the Porte, "I did not know that your army is so poor in spirit."

Such is the Herzl of the *Diaries* in his manifold personality with all his virtues and failings. The data explain much, both in the movement and in the expression of the personality of the founder, but do not explain the phenomenon that is Herzl. Whence the inexhaustible fountain of energy, the iron will, the source of inspiration which moved the man to continue his work in spite of pitfalls, impassable gulfs, and failures? Whence the certainty in the need and justice of the cause which empowered the general without an army to face kings and autocrats with pride and dignity, and plead on behalf of a people which did not send him? Was the source of all this the heritage of the ages or the selection of Providence? The answer to these queries belongs to the unrevealed secrets of history.

v. As a quasi-autobiographical work and as one which throws much light on certain phases of the history of both modern Hebrew literature and that of the national movement can be considered the *Igrot Aḥad ha-'Am* (The Letters of Aḥad ha-'Am), in six volumes. The *Igrot* contain the collected letters of the famous publicist and essayist, the father of the so-called spiritual Zionism, Asher Ginzberg—pen-name Aḥad ha-'Am—written during a period of close to a quarter of a century. Aḥad ha-'Am, of whose views, theories, and teachings we will have more to say, was one of the outstanding figures in Jewish life during the two decades before the World War, and it can be said that the esteem and respect paid him by the leading intellectual, literary, and nationalistic circles almost equalled those accorded to Herzl. However, unlike the latter, he never headed any national organization, nor did he ever undertake any diplomatic mission, nor found great institutions

of national import, nor did he sway the masses by his oratory. His influence was based largely on his writings and partly on his participation in the work of the *Hobebé Zion* for twenty-five years, as well as in all literary and cultural activities of the age. In his private life he was engaged successively in business, as editor of the Hebrew monthly, *ha-Shiloah* (Sec. 53), and later as agent of the famous tea firm of Wisotzky, first in Russia and later in London. In short, the pen-name, *Aḥad ha-'Am* (One of the People), fairly characterized his general unofficial position and his modest economic circumstances. That a man lacking the important attributes which usually make for power should have exerted such influence in Jewry merely through his literary activity—and that was comparatively of modest proportion, for he only left four volumes of essays—at a time when literary talent was no rarity, certainly constitutes a remarkable phenomenon. The explanation of the phenomenon lies largely in the quality, brilliancy, and clarity of thought and ideas as expressed in his essays, but to a considerable extent in his personality and in that aspect of his literary contribution unknown to the public. These are revealed to us in the letters and hence their value.

The letters cover the period beginning with the year 1896 and ending with 1920. The first two volumes contain letters written from the year 1896 to the end of 1901; the third volume from 1902 to 1908; the fourth from 1908 to 1912; and the other two volumes embrace the correspondence conducted after that. During the six years 1896-1903, Aḥad ha-'Am was the editor of the *ha-Shiloah* and his correspondence concerns itself primarily with literary affairs, but also to a considerable extent with the national movement and with general cultural matters. It is these years which can be considered the formative ones of his rising influence, and the correspondence of that time constitutes the key both to the secret and to the development of his personality. In the letters of this period which cover two and one half volumes he is revealed to us in his greatness.

Aḥad ha-'Am was an autodidact, never visited a university nor a school, but by sheer extensive reading, assiduous study, and native mental keenness, he acquired extensive knowledge, literary taste, and sound judgment, which together with an exceptional character, sense of proportion, and propriety of conduct, made him a literary educator of a generation of writers, poets, scholars and novelists. Hebrew literature in the nineties still possessed a provincial character. Verbosity,

narrowness of vision, lack of proportion and clarity of expression, and many other grievous faults abounded. Criticism was tinged with personal aspersion, poetry with euphuism, stories with planlessness, and articles with lack of ethical propriety. All these were gradually weeded out by the editor of the *ha-Shiloah*. All the famous poets, novelists, essayists, and historians who in the last forty years made their mark upon Hebrew literature and Jewish life passed through the severe school of Aḥad ha-'Am; not only the beginners, but even those who previous to his arrival on the field of literature had already attained literary fame. In letter after letter he instructs writers in taste, style, proportion, clarity of thought and all other qualities. Some he teaches precision of style; others, respect for tradition and for the ideals of other people; still others, not to indulge in personalities in their criticism nor in biting irony; and fanatics, he advises tolerance. Old and young smarted under his scourging reproaches and learned the proper way of writing and thus climbed the heights. Opposed as he was to the methods of political Zionism, he chastises the young Bialik in a letter for his light attitude towards this ideal sacred to many, which he expressed in a poem penned in a careless mood, and he refuses to print it. In another epistle he reprimands the mighty Frishman for an improper expression about Moses, though he himself was not a true believer in the historicity of Moses, as evidenced in his essay *Moisheh*. To Berdichewski, the lion among the younger literati, he tells openly that his style is befogged and that many of his articles are unworthy of publication, both on account of style and of vehemence of spirit. Thus year after year, he taught, chastised, guided, painstakingly corrected, and rewrote articles, essays and even poems. The writers chafed and squirmed under the withering remarks, but change gradually came, until finally a generation arose which thought, wrote, and sang in a different tone and manner.

The subjection, voluntary or involuntary, to the self-appointed master, was primarily due to the personality of Aḥad ha-'Am. It is difficult to trace the sources of the character of the essayist, for the fact that he descended from a distinguished family does not entirely explain it. The fact is that Ginzberg as a person does not at all fit the pseudonym Aḥad ha-'Am, for he was not one of the people but rose above many of the distinguished leaders of the age. His was a soul which exhibited a noble amalgam of qualities. His standard of ethical conduct was high, and he was ready to make great sacrifices in order not to deviate

from it. In a number of letters to the managers of *Ahiasaf*, the publishers of the monthly, he threatens to resign if the least force will be exerted to publish anything which does not conform to the truth as he conceived it, in spite of the fact that the salary he received was his only means of subsistence, and notwithstanding that such articles would benefit the national movement to which both publishers and editor were devoted. His code of conduct was rigorous; many an article he refused because it was slightly disrespectful towards another person. Frankness, open-mindedness, value of human dignity, strong hatred of hypocrisy and dissimulation, and fearlessness in opposing any person or idea which deviated from his standard were the principal traits of his character which are revealed to us in the correspondence. In one of the letters he upbraided Frishman, his friend for many years, for his editorship of the weekly, *ha-Dor*, because the latter, who was indifferent to the national movement, was willing to conduct the weekly in the spirit of that movement at the demand of the publishers. He saw in such willingness a kind of hypocrisy, though it was innocuous. In a letter to Yellin in regard to the honorarium he paid him, which was lower than expected on account of the poor circumstances of the *ha-Shiloah*, he tells him that if perchance he did not inform him of the change beforehand, he will pay the difference from his own pocket. Thus trait after trait are projected before us in the letters which gradually are combined into a picture of a noble character and personality rarely met with in men of talent and public activity, and this explains the reason for his influence on his generation and imparts value to the letters.

That human character is not perfect is known to all, and that even Aḥad ha-'Am's fine personality had weaknesses is needless to say. Of these the chief were self-absorption, excessive severity, and a certain narrowness of vision which prevented him from seeing aspects other than those that he considered true. These weaknesses are disclosed to us in the letters more than in his essays, for it is these that reflect the intimate side of his character. They are especially seen in those epistles which bear upon his opposition to political or Herzlian Zionism. Ginzberg fought bitterly against it for a period close to two decades. He saw in its exaggerations a false light which may mislead, and a lack of truth, and noted the unjewishness of many of its leaders. Only after the War, when the incorrectness of his assertions and prophecies was proved, he became friendlier to it. This strife is presented in

the letters in a much less attractive form than in the essays. In his essay on the First Zionist Congress, though expressing a vigorous protest against the tendency of political Zionism, he speaks of that gathering with respect as of one "which gave to the Jews a glorious hour, when Jewish representatives of the world over stood and heard the wonderful words of their great brother (Nordau) who spoke like one of the prophets of old," while in one of his letters he refers to it as an "assembly of youngsters" and says, "who knows if the Congress was not the last sigh of the nation" (Vol. I, p. 126). That his prophecy did not come true he realized but too soon; still he did not change his attitude towards political Zionism, and another letter illustrates it in a very glaring way. When the Technicum at Haifa was projected, the Jewish National Fund offered a plot for the building but asked for no representation on the directorship. Aḥad ha-'Am who was one of the founders rejoiced at their modesty and expressed himself that were the National Fund to ask representation he would have opposed the acceptance of the plot. In still another letter he says that he will never agree to the representation of the Zionist Organization on the board of the Technicum (Vol. III, pp. 32, 36), while he readily consented to the representatives of the *Hilfsverein* and to their non-nationalistic directors. The weakness and pettiness of the strong and the great are verily to be pitied.

The six volumes of letters illuminate also the characters of the correspondents, their views, attitudes, and inclinations. These represent almost all the leading men in Jewry in every walk of life, for there was not a phase of it on which the essayist was not consulted. This feature of course enhances the value of the collection and makes it an important literary and historical document.

vi. An autobiography of interest, which sheds light on some phases of Jewish life in the Russian Jewish center during the three decades, 1890-1920, especially on the struggles of the Zionist movement for acceptance by the Jewish masses is the *Alé Heldi* (My World) by Isaac Nissenbaum (1869). The author, who for a great part of his life had served as itinerant propagandist for the national idea, first in the employ of the *Hobebé Zion* and later as a champion of the Herzlian Zionism, traveled through the length and breadth of the Russian Pale of Settlement, visiting yearly hundreds of communities, and thus came in contact with every important leader and representative of that Jewry. In addition, he distinguished himself also as a Hebrew writer, and for a

number of years was a prominent member of the editorial board of the Hebrew Daily, *ha-Zefirah*. He also visited Palestine in 1905, and made a thorough study of the Jewish colonies at that time. All these varied experiences are recorded in the Memoirs, and as a result there passes before us a kaleidoscopic panorama of a section of Jewish life during several decades, which not only enriches our knowledge of recent Jewish history, but also vivifies our conception of it. In a series of portraits of both men and events, the author presents before us the struggles and vicissitudes of the national idea, the painful and slow steps it made among Jewish communities, the opposition it met from famous Rabbis, and on the other hand, the devotion and self-sacrifice of some of its champions, and finally its ultimate victory when it became the leading factor in Jewish life. These portraits possess not only cultural and historical value, but also human interest, for they reveal phases of great Jewish personalities and the various metamorphoses of their character. As an instance, we may point to the fact told by the author that the late chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, A. I. Kook, who distinguished himself both as a deep thinker and a man of liberal views, thoroughly devoted to Jewish nationalism, was in his younger years, when Rabbi at Bausk, in the province of Kurland, a vigorous opponent of Zionism and wrote a number of polemic articles against it. It was the influence of Palestine—he became Rabbi of Jaffa in 1904—which deepened his thoughts, widened his horizon and made him the outstanding personality in Jewry that he became during the last two decades of his life. Of intensive interest is his description of the state of Jewish settlements in Palestine in the year 1905, which occupies about one hundred pages and depicts in detail the economic, social and cultural phases of life in the Jewish colonies. There is much of historical, biographical and human value in Nissenbaum's vivid narrative.

The Memoirs, though, are not limited to the national movement, but contain glimpses of other phases of Jewish life, the life as it was lived in the communities daily during a great part of the period under discussion. Of these, the personal reminiscences of the author and the description of the typical Jewish environment in which he passed his childhood, youth, and a decade of married life are of special value. The vivid style and the frequent dramatic descriptions of persons and events are added attractive features of the work.

vii. In addition to the works hitherto dealt with, we must note two works of a miscellaneous character, inasmuch as they deal with the

social, cultural and literary phases of Jewish history in the 17th and 18th centuries in Poland, and in the 19th century in Russia respectively. These are *Yiden in Poilen* (Jews in Poland) by M. Balaban (Sec. 106) and *Historishe Werk* (Historical Writings) by S. Ginsburg. The first is a collection of historical sketches, dealing, as said, with various phases of Jewish life in Poland during the centuries mentioned. The sketches are divided into five series; the first contains portraits of distinguished Jewish leaders and representatives of Polish Jewry during two centuries, beginning with Saul Wohl in the early decades of the seventeenth and ending with Leibush Balaban at the close of the eighteenth century. Of this series the most important is the essay on Saul Wohl, around whom there clustered a whole group of legends, which made him the king of Poland for a day. It is told that when the Polish nobles could not unite on the election of a king on the appointed day, Prince Radzivill declared that it would be advisable to elect the Jew, Saul, his friend, as temporary king. His advice was followed and Saul ruled Poland for twenty-four hours. The historian delineates the life of Saul, his activities, and his efforts on behalf of his brethern, and endeavors to trace the origin of the legend.

The second series embraces a group of essays on episodes in the history of the two important Jewish communities, Cracow and Lublin, especially during the Cossack insurrections in the years 1648-1660, and the Swedish invasion in Poland in the years 1655-1657. The essays contain data hitherto unknown which are drawn from first sources, royal archives, and community record-books (Pinkasim). Of particular interest is the last essay dealing with the struggle during the greater part of the eighteenth century of the Jews of Lublin for the right to do business in the city which their Christian competitors strove to take away from them.

The third series gives a succinct account of the oldest Hebrew printing-presses in Poland, as well as of the activities of the censors both in Poland proper and in Austrian Galicia. The essays contain many interesting data, among which there are to be pointed out the following. The first Hebrew press was established in Cracow in the year 1634 by three brothers, Samuel, Asher, and Eliakim, sons of Hayyim of Halicz. The first book to be printed in that year was the code known as *Shaaré Dura* (Vol. II, Sec. 53). Three years later in 1637, the three brothers, for reasons unknown, converted themselves. One of the brothers, Samuel, later went to Constantinople and re-

turned to Judaism. The other two, however, continued to print Hebrew books and asked the king to force their brethren to buy them. The king granted the request, but all efforts of the government were of no avail, and the Jews boycotted the books issued by the converts, and only once, under special pressure of a particular decree of the king, did they buy a certain number of books from the apostates.

The fourth and fifth series contain essays on Napoleon's attitude to Polish Jews, on the architecture of the old synagogues, and on old Jewish objects of art respectively. As an appendix there are short biographical notices of a number of contemporary Jewish historians, most of whom hailed from Galicia. The work, on account of the painstaking research of the author in archives and old documents displayed in it, is a distinct contribution to Jewish history in Poland.

The same qualities, original research in documents and a variety of themes which illustrate Russian Jewish life in the nineteenth century from many angles, mark also the second work, which embraces three volumes. Ginsberg, who has devoted more than forty years to the study of Jewish history in Russia, collected in this work his essays written during the four decades both in Russian and Yiddish—the former were translated by him into Yiddish. The essays in the first volume were arranged with no particular method and portray various curious episodes, outstanding events in past Jewish life, as well as leading personalities. Of the subjects dealt with in the first volume there are to be noted: the participation of some Jews in the December Revolt of 1825; the arrest and exile of the poet, Judah Leib Gordon, in the year 1879; the letters of Mendele Moker Seforim; Napoleon and Jews of Borisow dealing with the relation of the Emperor to the Jews of that community during his retreat from Russia in 1812; and the *Woskhod*—the leading Russian-Jewish monthly—and its founder.

The second volume includes mostly essays which have a wider scope, covering phases of Jewish life during the reign of Nicholas I and the two Alexanders, II and III. In some of these essays, Ginsburg portrays phases of Jewish life which bear a more personal and intimate character. These are: *A Century of Family History*; *A Family Chronicle*; *A Family Correspondence*, and several more. In these, the private life of several important Jewish families which contributed to the spread of Haskalah in Russia is reflected, and indirectly we have glimpses of the inner life in the upper circles of Russian Jewry in the span of time from the thirties to the seventies of the last century. Of a wider scope and

of greater importance is the lengthy essay on the family of Baron Günzburg. In this essay, the lives, characters, and activities of three successive generations of representative Jews, Yusel Günzburg, his son Horace, and grandson David, are masterfully delineated and described in great detail from personal knowledge, for the writer was an intimate friend of the last two barons. Of the numerous details illustrating the devotion of Horace to his brethren and his exceptional self-sacrifice for their sake, we will quote one. In 1892, the private bank of the Günzburgs went into bankruptcy. That event was considered a catastrophe for Russian Jewry in general, and prayers were offered in many synagogues that it be averted. But on the very day when the exchange of St. Petersburg appointed a receivership committee and Horace was to appear before it, he spent two hours, previous to his appearance, in pleading before the governor of Podolia to recall a decree of expulsion of Jews from a number of villages of that province.

The third volume is devoted to episodes of Jewish suffering in Russia. The most important is the monograph—one hundred and thirty-eight pages long—on the Jewish Cantonists. It describes in detail that painful chapter in Russian Jewish history when children of ten or twelve years were turned over to military service which lasted thirty-five years. It reveals the full tragedy of that event, the efforts made by the government to convert these children, the inquisitorial methods employed for that purpose, and many other phases of the tragedy. It forms one of the darkest pages of the Czarist regime and of Russian Jewish history, and Ginsberg's monograph throws a lurid light upon it.

The value of the work consists in the richness of material and wealth of data revealed for the first time. It is enhanced by the vivid style and dramatic touches introduced by the writer.

CHAPTER XII

PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY, AND ETHICS

115. *GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS*

The national idea as expressed in the Zionist and similar movements which, as we have seen, revolutionized Jewish life during the period under discussion and laid its impress upon many branches of Jewish literature, did not fail to stamp the thought and speculation of the time with its features. In fact, the process was really a reverse one. It was the various speculative nationalistic theories propounded by one thinker after another which resuscitated or rather isolated the national element enfolded in Judaism and turned it into a strong impetus and mighty force which changed the life of world Jewry to a great extent.

As a result a large part of the thought of the period follows in opposite direction to that of the speculation of the preceding one. The Jewish thinkers of the first three quarters of the last century not only endeavored to prove the consistency of the principles of the Jewish religion with those of the various general metaphysical systems, but continually emphasized the universal aspect of Judaism and its destiny of ultimately becoming the religion of humanity. The reverse is seen with the thinkers of later times; while they do not deny that Judaism possesses principles of universal application, the emphasis is laid upon the particular characteristics of Judaism as a view of the world and life of the Jewish group; and though endeavors are made to prove the consistency of Judaism with the thought of the time, it is not the metaphysics of the age which is connoted by this term, but the social theories which meanwhile have assumed ascendancy in the intellectual world. The center of Jewish speculation was thus removed from the field of theology and pure philosophy to that of social thought, and accordingly, it gradually divested itself from the religious element which was hitherto dominant in it, and became more and more secular.

The foregoing description, however, applies only to the larger part of that type of speculation which we characterize as nationalistic, but not to all of its expressions; religion was not entirely banished from nationalistic thought. There were currents which strongly enunciated the national idea and called for its translation into an active force in life from the point of view of pure religion. The representatives of this tendency not only did not seek to demonstrate the consistency of Judaism with the dominant social thought of the times, but some of them were not even aware of the existence of such speculation. Delving deep into the philosophy of the Judaism they knew, they concluded that the projection of the national idea and its realization in life is a necessary postulate of the faith and religious philosophy of the ages.

Nor did the theological-philosophical type of Jewish thought disappear from the speculative literature of the period. We said that only the larger part of the thought followed in an opposite direction than that of the preceding period, but there was a minor part which continued the thread of thought of the earlier age. There were thinkers, and some of them of great fame as philosophers, who still persisted in demonstrating the compatability of Judaism with modern metaphysics, and in emphasizing its universality and its great contributions to human progress. Moreover, this emphasis and insistence upon the universal features of Judaism was carried on by these thinkers with excessive vigor and with a polemic tinge against the prevailing national philosophies which they considered a break with tradition and as opposed to the true character of Judaism. They did not escape the influence of the national idea altogether, though as far as they were concerned, it expressed itself in a negative way.

Jewish thought of the period is thus of a heterogeneous character. There is the lesser, though quite distinct current, of the theological-philosophical aspect, on the one hand, and the national philosophy in its various expressions, varying from a deeply religious shade to the complete secular variety, on the other hand, besides a few eddies of thought of a nondescript character. With these preliminary remarks we shall proceed to survey the course of development of the thought of the period and its diversified and manifold way. We shall begin with the views of Moses Hess, the earliest propounder of a systematic national philosophy which, while secular in character on the whole, yet contains sufficient religious element to give it a dual aspect.

A. PHILOSOPHIES OF NATIONALISM

116. MOSES HESS

Moses Hess (1812-1875), the first thinker who supplied to the national idea a philosophic basis, assumed the role of an apostle of Zion towards the end of his life, for it was in 1862, thirteen years before his death, that he wrote his *Rom und Jerusalem*, containing his call to the Jews to rehabilitate their ancient land. He reached his goal by a devious way, full of twists and turns, which for a time carried him away from his brethren into strange camps and threw him into the midst of the whirl of German politics and the rising class struggle between labor and capital. Only after he had been driven by the victorious reactionary forces from the political and economic battle-fields did he return to his brethren and became the prophet of their national resurrection.

In his early youth, Hess was raised in a traditional Jewish environment, first in his father's home at Bonn, and from the age of nine, when his parents left for Cologne, in his grandfather's house in the same city. However, the love for his people and its tradition which he imbibed in this environment were destined to remain dormant in his soul for a very long time, for when he entered the Bonn University in 1830, at the age of eighteen, he was immediately swept away by the liberal and radical movements and tendencies of which the halls of learning were at that time the center. It did not take long and young Hess was immersed in the propagation of the socialist movement, and after a short business career, he devoted himself entirely to this activity, cooperating with the leaders of the radical movements at the time in their endeavors to spread their ideas among the laboring class. He did not, however, neglect his philosophical studies and in 1837 he published his first work entitled *The Sacred History of Humanity* by a young Spinozist, which contains his philosophy of history. This was followed in 1841 by his *European Triarchy* in which he stated his views on European politics and advocated an alliance between the three important nations of Europe, England, France, and Germany. The following seven years were years of intensive activity for Hess. His fiery soul responded to every call for action that issued from the leaders of liberal and radical movements. In his enthusiasm he often overlooked party lines and for a time he swerved from orthodox socialism to communism and even attempted to elaborate a kind of system of

philosophical anarchism according to which the individual is to have absolute freedom. These aberrations, which angered his former colleagues, did not last long, and from the year 1846 on, Hess preached along with Marx and other socialist leaders the gospel of economic socialism, and together with them took active part in the Revolution of 1848. In the following year, when the reaction had set in, and he among other leaders of the Revolution was condemned to death, he went into exile, and after wandering aimlessly for several years, settled in 1853 in Paris where he spent the greater part of his remaining years.

During the first seven years of his residence in Paris, Hess gave up all political and social activity and devoted himself to the study of the physical and biological sciences, especially anatomy, anthropology, and ethnology. These studies marked the turning point in Hess' mental attitude. He became convinced that the doctrine of cosmopolitanism which preaches the abolition of nationalism and the fusing of humanity into one motley mass has no scientific basis. He furthermore learned that the distinction between nations, expressed in various peculiarities, both physiological and mental, is not artificial but primal and inherent. He then began to reflect on the fate and future of his own nation which he had forsaken for so long, and the result of his reflections was his *Rom und Jerusalem* published in 1862. The remaining thirteen years of his life he spent in scientific and Jewish studies and in literary work, contributing frequently to socialist periodicals and to Jewish publications. He also participated in socialistic propaganda during his brief visits to Germany, and after the Prussian War he published a book under the name *The Defeated Nation*, in which he advocated an alliance of all nations against Prussianized Germany, a fact which today proves his far-sighted political vision.

The national philosophy of Hess, expressed not systematically, but rather in a literary manner glowing with emotion in the series of letters comprising his *Rom und Jerusalem*, cannot be understood without a conception of his general views of the world and life, which are likewise not developed in logical sequence but in sporadic outbursts of thought. Both phases of his thought, the general and the Jewish, form one organic whole, which can be presented in outline as follows.

Hess called himself a Spinozist; he also called himself a Hegelian. In reality, he only had points of contact with these thinkers, while his teaching extends far beyond the doctrines of both and is more adapt-

able to life and more fruitful as a social factor. His point of contact with Spinoza is really the genuine Jewish element embedded in the philosophy of both, which is the conception of unity underlying all manifestations of the universe. Hess not only subscribed to Spinoza's doctrine that God is the only substance and the ground of the universe, but believed it to be a fundamental expression of the Jewish genius. From that point on, however, there is no more common ground between him and the Amsterdam thinker, for while the latter mechanizes both God and the universe, the view of Hess can be described as genetic or creative. According to it, the world, notwithstanding its variety of phases, is a unity; there is no place in it for a dualism of matter and spirit, for it is one—an undivided whole, and the multiplicity is only apparent, namely, the unfolding of a basic unity. The essence of that unity is the all-embracing force—the Creator, or God.¹ He, the all-unifying force, expresses himself in all multiple phenomena of nature and life and thus creates them, making the entire world a created one.

This concept of creation is the one which imparts importance to Hess' view. Contrary to Spinoza, Hess protests against the mechanical conception and sees in the world a constant tendency towards creation, for creation, says he, does not imply only the creating of things from nothing, but connotes also a new arrangement of existing materials, namely the forming of things anew.² Furthermore, he asserts that the life of the world does not arise through a blind operation of forces but is developed with a purpose and aim which will finally be realized. This aim is the harmony of all antagonistic elements and opposing forces which will culminate in a peaceful coöperation of all for perfection and further progress. In this conception there is undoubtedly Hegelian influence, but Hess employed it to better advantage than the master.

This creative force of the universe, continues Hess, is a vital force, and the entire universe is a living being which is divided into three life spheres: the cosmic, the organic, and the social or the human. These are all parts of a great whole, for one creative force called them into being. Movement is the essence of all three spheres, for there is nothing stable in them; all things are constantly being formed anew. He does not even believe in the constancy of atoms. They are only centers

¹ *Rom und Jerusalem*, Epilogue, Ch. III.

² *Ibid.*

of energy from which creation proceeds, and correspondingly there are such centers in the other spheres, germs in the organic, and revelations of creative ideas in the social.³

There is in this view of the world and life as a process of constant becoming a foreshadowing of Bergson's theory of creative evolution, but to Hess it merely served as a basis for a philosophy of history. History which deals with the social sphere of life is to Hess on a par with nature permeated with the same creative force, for God reveals Himself in history no less than in nature. Accordingly, like nature, it is in the process of constant development, which development goes on in a dialectic form, namely forces opposing each other are ultimately reconciled by a new synthetic epoch. And like nature, it passes through three periods, rise, growth, and maturity. But while nature, according to Hess, has already entered upon the third phase of its development, history is still striving toward it. Speaking symbolically, he designates the third period by the Biblical term Sabbath which means both rest and completion. The cosmic and organic spheres have already begun their Sabbaths, but the Sabbath of history, i.e. the period of maturity of human development, when all opposing forces in the social sphere will be harmonized and men will become morally free, is still to be attained. It is, he declares, the task of the Jewish people to bring about this *Sabbath of History* and thus fulfill their mission in the world.

To this conclusion he came through his conception of society which he formed in later years. Society, according to this conception, is not an abstract idea, but is composed of elements known as races, each possessing particular characteristics, both mental and physiological, which are unalterable. It is an organic body, the organs of which are the races or nations, and each of these organs has a definite function to perform for the benefit of the whole. It is in the performance of the function that the purpose of the existence of the organ is realized. The Jewish nation is singled out by him as one which has performed during its long existence one of the important functions for the benefit of humanity and is destined to perform in the future a still greater service. Israel, says Hess, served as the medium of divine revelation in the world, for "religion, in its perfected form, is the bond between the Creator and the created, the bridge which leads from one creation to another."⁴ The Jewish genius has expressed itself in all times, from

³ Ibid.

⁴ *Rom und Jerusalem*, Letter IX.

the prophets on, in the highest form of religious thought and feeling. Judaism is a historical religion, namely one which operates primarily in the social sphere, and its most characteristic point is that it places before human history the highest goal, namely the realization of universal law.⁵ The Jews taught humanity true religion, which is neither purely spiritualistic, nor materialistic, and which has for its aim, unlike Christianity, not the salvation of the individual in the other world but the perfection of the social life in this world. It is then this historical function, namely to create for humanity new social values, which evolves upon them to discharge in the future.

At this point the problem presents itself, how are the Jews to fulfill this function for the benefit of others if they themselves are scattered to the four corners of the world and subjected to the influence of others, both politically and culturally? He therefore concludes that this is impossible in exile, for there the Jews must concentrate all their efforts on the struggle for mere existence; in addition, they lack the basis of all national life—the soil. In the Diaspora the Jew cannot be creative and it is only in Palestine that he can be regenerated and produce creative social values which will ultimately bring about that *Sabbath of History*, the goal of the social sphere of life. Thus, the social reformer, the champion of the proletariat, ultimately pronounced the reestablishment of the Jews in their ancient land as a necessary consequence of the process of the history of humanity, and in this way placed the Jewish national idea on the plane of world moral and historical problems.

Hess indeed visualized a bright future for his people in its own land. Not only did he hope for its spiritual glory, when the Jewish religious view will widen into a perfect scientific moral view of life which will ultimately become the heritage of all humanity,⁶ but he also foresaw for it a great material and political future. He believed that when the Jews will settle in Palestine which is situated at the meeting point of three continents, they will become the transmitters of the European civilization back into Asia.⁷

This is, in brief, the national philosophy of Hess as embodied in his work, *Rom und Jerusalem*. The book itself contains much more. Hess, in spite of his enthusiasm and propensity for dreaming, possessed a practical sense, and in various places in his book he proposes the

⁵ See his article, *Die Einheit des Judentums innerhalb der heutigen religiösen Anarchie*, *Monatsschrift*, 1869.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Note 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Letter XI.

foundation of a Jewish Colonization Association which should begin immediately the realization of the restoration, even through small settlements, for he believed in the power of evolution, provided it be constant. He was the first to point out the necessity of calling a Jewish World Congress for the purpose of declaring to all nations the striving of the Jews to restore their ancient land, and to ask their help in the realization of this desire.⁸ For political support he looked to France which was to him the champion of oppressed nations.

A large part of the book is devoted to negative criticism of conceptions of Jewish life of his day. He is especially vehement against the reformers and assimilationists who deny Jewish nationality and substitute in its place an abstract indefinite teaching which they term "Mission." To him a Jewish mission in the Diaspora seemed the height of absurdity. There is much that is obsolete in his polemics and criticism of his opponents, but also much that is still valuable, for almost every page of Hess glows with emotion and genuine love for his people, its traditions, and genius.

Hess represents the finest synthesis of opposing forces. He is simultaneously national and cosmopolitan, religious and secular. His religion is not a narrow dogmatic creed but an important factor in human history. His Jewish nationalism does not merely strive to reconstitute a small autonomous settlement, but to become a mighty cultural human force in the social world. This grand vision of the thinker seems to us today in the light of present world conditions a sad commentary upon the events, but who knows whether at least a large part of it may not be realized when the wheel of history will turn in another direction?

117. THE RELIGIOUS CURRENT

i. The national idea found its spokesman also among the representatives of the Jewish religion, and the first to pronounce it primarily from a Jewish religious point of view, though not overlooking the social and universal human aspects, was Zebi Hirsch Kalischer (1795-1874), Rabbi of the Jewish community at Thorn. Kalischer was not only a great and renowned Talmudist, the author of a commentary on the *Hoshen Mishpat*, the code of civil law, but also a deep religious thinker, who in his two volume work, *Emunah Yesharah* (The Right Faith), endeavored to prove the consistency of the dogmas of Judaism with the principles of reason. While reflecting on the compatibility of faith with

⁸ Ibid., Note IX.

reason, he also became interested in the problem of the redemption of the Jewish people or the question of the arrival of the Messiah. And rationalist that he was, he came to the conclusion that even that grand event, in spite of the halo of legend and miracle surrounding it, must have a natural beginning, namely that the Jews must first settle in Palestine in large numbers, found some form of government, though only autonomous, under the protection of the great European nations, and that only then will the Messiah ultimately appear. He found sufficient proof in Talmudic literature for his view and propounded it in several books and pamphlets, notable among which are the *Drishat Zion* (Inquiry for Zion), the *Rishon le-Zion* (First of Zion), and the *Shaalû Shlom Yerushalayyim* (Seek the Peace of Jerusalem). A great part of these writings is devoted to citations of authorities from the entire Jewish literature for the view that the promised redemption will begin in a natural and not in a miraculous way. In fact, he proves that the settlement of the Jews in Palestine is a *conditio sine qua non* for the arrival of the Messiah, and it is this which will hasten his coming. He even advocates the restoration of sacrifices in Jerusalem, though the Temple will not yet have been rebuilt, and endeavors to prove the legitimacy of such practice from the point of view of the law against many Rabbinical authorities of his time who opposed such a plan. On the whole, the purely religious advantage accruing from such a settlement, namely the observance of many *Mizwot* which are dependent upon residence in Palestine, played an important role in his arguments. Yet it seems that the excessive emphasis of this particular point was more a means of stimulating the interest of the ultra-Orthodox in his plan than a real expression of his own view of the resettlement of Palestine, which was in reality founded on two cardinal principles, his conception of Judaism and his world outlook.

The first is that Jewish life and religion comprise a series of unities which complete each other and constitute one whole, and when one is absent the whole series is affected. These are the one God, who selected one people—Israel—and who gave them one land for an everlasting heritage and one Torah for the guidance and fulfillment of their destiny. It follows, says he, that when the land is not an element in Jewish life, that life is seriously defective and cannot function properly.⁹ Hence he advocates the resettlement of the land. This principle re-

⁹ *Shlom Yerushalayyim*, p. 1.

minds us of Judah ha-Levi's view propounded in his *Kuzari* (Vol. I, Sec. 170) to which work Kalischer refers from time to time.

The second principle is similar in character to the view of Hess on the destiny and the historical function of Israel, except that it is colored with a distinctly religious hue. Israel, says Kalischer, as evident from his history, was appointed by God to disseminate true religious belief among the nations, and as long as he lived in his land, the spirit of God animated his prophets and they preached their noble ideas to all humanity. But since he went into exile, the divine spirit ceased to function, and error and injustice prevail in the world. Is it possible, asks he, that the merciful God will not provide a remedy for the ills of humanity? The aims of God, it is true, are hidden from us, but may we not conclude that a new settlement in the ancient land by the chosen people will once more restore that spirit in Israel and enable him to become the light of nations as promised by the prophets of old?¹⁰ We thus note in Kalischer the same elemental tendency displayed by Hess to make the realization of the national idea a factor in the moral and religious progress of humanity as a whole. It is true that Kalischer does not elaborate his views in a scientific manner and is brief in his expression, but the kernel of the whole thought is there and forms an important step in the progress of religious national thought.

Like Hess, Kalischer possessed a practical sense, and even to a greater degree than the former. He organized several associations for the establishment of colonies in Palestine, and though he did not live to see the fruits of his endeavors, his is the credit for giving the first practical impetus to the *Hovevê Zion* movement.

ii. Another religious promulgator of the national idea who even preceded Kalischer was Judah Alkalay (ca. 1798-1872), Rabbi of the Sephardic community at Semlin, Hungary. Alkalay who was mystically inclined and an enthusiast in general conceived the idea of a re-settlement of the Jews in Palestine as early as the year 1837, and he outlined his plan in a brochure published that year. The Damascus affair in 1840 and the intervention of Cremieux and Moses Montefiore on behalf of the Jews of that city inflamed his Oriental imagination and gave wings to his dream. In the former event he saw one of the signs which are supposed to precede the coming of the Messiah, namely suffering (*Heble Moshiah*), and in the latter, a beginning of the redemption, which he too believed must arise in a natural way. He then continued

¹⁰ *Drishat Zion*, p. 20 a, b.

to publish books and pamphlets among which are the *Shlom Yerushalayyim*, *Kibuz Goliut* (Gathering of the Exiles), *Shibat Zion* (Return to Zion), and *Minhat Yehudah* (The Gift of Judah) to propagate his plan. In all these, Alkalay, like Kalischer, proves by citations from authorities the urgent need for the settlement of Palestine as the first step in the redemption. Moreover, he calculates in a mystical manner from many verses that the period of the *Kez* i.e. the exile, will actually begin with the year 1841. Characteristic of the manner of his thought is the peculiar interpretation of the *Moshiah ben Yosef*, i.e. the Ephraimite Messiah who, according to Midrashic lore, is to precede the arrival of the Davidic Messiah. That *Moshiah*, says he, is only a symbolic expression for a great Jewish Assembly¹¹ for the purpose of the resettlement of Palestine as well as for the actual migration of Jews into that land. He therefore laid much stress upon the activities of Cremieux and Montefiore, the representatives of Israel, and also upon the important position of the Rothschilds in the financial and political world. He appealed to them to become the initiators of that assembly. There is little of philosophical thought in these expressions but much of the emotional. However, while the theoretical aspect of our author's view is limited, the practical elaboration of his scheme of restoration is wide and contains political and secularly national elements. In fact, he was in a way the forerunner of political Zionism. He proposes in his brochures the formation of a financial company for the purpose of buying Palestine from the Sultan and the establishment there of an autonomous government under his suzerainty. That company should also build railroads and own boat-lines and in general manage the economic affairs of the settlers in the early days. In short, his plan reminds us of the one Herzl propounded in his *Jewish State*. Alkalay did not live to see even the beginning of the realization of his grand plans, but his strivings were not in vain.

iii. A colleague of the two elderly champions of the national idea was Elias Guttmacher (1796-1874), Rabbi at Greidiz, Prussian Poland. He delved much in Kabbala and was saturated with mysticism, and from that point of view he supported the plans of his friend Kalischer. According to Guttmacher, the arrival of the Messianic era must be preceded by the self-emancipation of the Jews from the evils of exile. In exile, says he, not only does the Jewish body suffer, but also the Jewish

¹¹ He plays upon the word מִסְבָּה which he derived from מִסְבָּה to assemble. *Minhat Yehudah*, Sec. 32.

soul which longs for its source. The restoration of Palestine will heal both the body and soul of Israel. These are noble ideas indeed, expressed in aphorisms and clothed in mystical garb. But as we will see, they bear a striking resemblance in essence to some of the fundamental ideas of Aḥad ha-'Am.

iv. A nationalist thinker whose speculation was permeated with the religious spirit was Yeḥiel Mikhal Pines (1843-1913). Pines was a Talmudic scholar but also possessed a broad general education and was a distinguished Hebrew essayist in the seventies of the last century. Imbued with a deep religious spirit, he devoted his pen to the defense of traditional Judaism against the views of some radical Hebrew writers as well as against assimilationist theories which were current at the time also in the intellectual Russian Jewish circles and found expression in the Russian Jewish press. His collection of essays entitled *Yaldé Ruḥi* (The Children of My Spirit), in two parts, was published in 1872. The first part is of a polemic nature intended to refute the arguments of the assimilationists and contains his theory of Jewish nationalism. His starting point is a definition of the nature of Judaism as distinguished from other religions. Judaism, says he, has for one of its principal purposes the preservation of Jewish nationalism, or in other words, the strict unity and adhesion of the Jewish social group. The very Torah which contains laws for the conduct of social and political life, the words of the prophets and sages all testify to that. But the strongest evidence is the hope for redemption which is deeply seated in the consciousness of the people. The very belief in the Messiah which theologians count as a dogma of faith is in reality only a result of the will of the people to live eternally. As a result of this view it follows that the Jews are not a religious group of diverse nationalities, as asserted by assimilationists and reformers, but a distinct nation. Still, says he, this national feeling by no means impairs Jewish patriotism in the lands where they reside, for a man can have two loves or two loyalties in his heart. He even asserts that the presence of several nationalities in a state benefits it, for it saves it from stagnation.

Turning then to trace the source of the views of the assimilationists which he considers to a degree unnatural, he finds it in the strong sense of imitation, which for one reason or another is peculiar to the Jewish people. There are, says he, two qualities in man which conduce to likeness in social groups, one is the inclination to unity and similarity of conduct to that of his fellow-beings which is beneficial to society,

and the other is that of imitation. This quality often produces much evil for it impairs independence of spirit. From time to time imitation broke forth in Israel and the people wanted to be like other nations. To guard against this tendency, there were instituted the laws of the Torah, and later the sages and scholars added more laws in order to preserve the original character of the people, and that imitation should not break its bounds. It is this proportionless imitation which moves the assimilationists to abandon their nationalism.

After a number of essays which are of an apologetic nature, defending certain phases of Jewish life and especially Jewish civil law which was still practiced by the masses of Russian Jewry, he proceeds in the second part to complete his view of the nature of Judaism and to combat the tendency to reform. In this view he emphasizes first that religion in general is based on an elemental and emotional need of man, and consequently it can never be entirely replaced by reason and science. However, when religion becomes an organized institution, assumes certain forms, and promulgates a set of dogmas, then a clash between religion and science may occur if the principles of the latter oppose the forms and dogmas of the former. Judaism, though, possesses in this regard an advantage, for its basic element, the Godhead conception, is so pure that even science cannot positively disprove it. Its very abstractedness saves it from attacks. Its external expression, its precepts and the performance of certain acts are only symbols for noble ethical ideas. It is true that even Judaism must necessarily undergo changes in the course of time, but these changes arise from a will to perfection implanted in the heart of every man, and as such, the changes are gradual and at times imperceptible, and only when they accumulate, do they become evident. He also admits that certain accretions which are undesirable were added to Judaism in the course of time. But, says he, this fact does not justify any artificial reform. The kind of reform advocated by the leaders of the movement in Western Europe is artificial and does not lead to the improvement of the state of religion, for it lacks sound principles and will ultimately lead to the destruction of religion itself. He proves his assertions more in a negative rather than in a positive way by pointing out the defects in the ways followed by the leaders of the Reform movement. He then concludes that any reform must be accomplished by life itself, that is when actual necessity for change will arise we can trust that the Jewish masses will find a way to effect that change without injury to the entire body of practices.

It must be admitted that many of the theories of Pines cannot stand the test of criticism, nor did the course of Jewish life bear out his view that it is best to trust the masses in affecting the necessary changes in Judaism, for these very masses often abandoned a large part of the precepts under pressure. Yet there are a number of sound kernels of thought in his view which could become fruitful for the preservation of a modernized and spiritualized traditional Judaism.

118. THE POLITICAL-SOCIAL TREND

In the national philosophies hitherto discussed attention is primarily paid to the spiritual aspect of the Jewish problem, whether from a religious or from a social-humanitarian point of view. No attention is paid to the problem from the material aspect, or rather from the point of view of the actual state of the Jews in the midst of the nations among whom they reside. The case is different with the views of several Jewish thinkers of the period. These men, on the other hand, paid little attention to the spiritual or religious phase of the problem, nor did they discuss the question whether the Jews are a religious group or a nation. They took Jewish nationalism for granted. The fact that the nations in the midst of whom the Jews dwell look upon them as a distinct group occupying a particular position in the social organism, and in a number of countries also in the body politic, was sufficient evidence for them that such a nationalism exists. They concentrated primarily upon the question from its political-social aspect, namely how to change the status of the Jews from a group which, if not persecuted or hated, is at best only involuntarily tolerated to that of equality in the society of nations. That this view is predominantly secular is needless to say.

i. The first to turn in that direction was Leon Pinsker (1821-1891) who, in his German brochure, *Autoemanzipation*, published in 1882, propounded his solution to the Jewish problem as he conceived it. The crux of the problem, according to him, is the question of anti-Semitism or Jew-hatred. He does not polemize against it nor does he attempt to prove its injustice; he merely wants to find a way to eradicate it or at least to minimize it to such a degree as to make Jewish life tolerable and dignified. But in order to find an answer to a vexing question we must first understand its origin, nature, and essence. Pinsker proceeds therefore to analyze the source and character of anti-Semitism. He asserts that religious animosity is not the principal ingredient of its nature, for were this the case it should have been greatly weakened in a

modern progressive world where religious fanaticism has no place. Its source, he claims, lies deeper; it is rooted in the national psychology of peoples. The animosity towards the Jew, says he, is a direct result of his abnormal situation. It is not due to the fact that the Jews are a minority group but to the inability of the large masses to understand them. The Jews lost their territory a long time ago, and according to the concrete notions of the average man which identify land and nation, the Jews should be considered a dead people, but they are not, and are conspicuously alive. Such a phenomenon of a landless people is extraordinary and inconceivable and consequently engenders an indefinable fear. And, as is well known, that the person we fear we also hate, the animosity of the Jew follows as a natural result. As a psychological trait it is transmitted from father to son, and no amount of progress will eradicate it unless the position of the Jew is radically changed.

This forms the principal cause of the animosity, but there are also other factors which are due to the general relations among nations. "There are," says Pinsker, "two important factors which stabilize the mutual relations between nations, the feeling of respect and fear of power. Respect is paid by individuals to persons of equal state, and the case is similar with nations. A nation which possesses a territory and a government is considered on an equal footing in the society of nations, and if some of its members migrate and settle in another land, they are welcome guests and are treated accordingly. Besides, these relations are also affected by fear of reprisal. It is not only friendliness which moves nations to proper treatment of each other, but also fear lest the injured nation will retaliate in kind and mistreat the members of the aggressor when they come to settle in its land."¹²

The Jews, of course, are deprived of both advantages; they have the status of "poor guests," unequal in position to the masters of the land and are unable to retaliate. Hence, asserts Pinsker, they will never attain real emancipation. Equal rights may be granted them as an act of mercy, but there will always be an attitude of superiority manifested by the ruling peoples toward them. The only logical conclusion then, states Pinsker, is the founding of a Jewish State. "A nation," says he, "cannot commit suicide, and it must search for a way how to live in a proper and dignified manner."¹³ He was not entirely unaware of the inner disorganization of the Jews and of their lack of a strong national

¹² *Autoemancipation*, p. 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

will, for after all he lived in the Russian Pale of Settlement. Yet, he believed that the Jewish people is not only deserving of a land but is also able to obtain it for he says, "A people of such a long history which possesses unity of race, vitality, and especially a noble religion, must build its future in its own land."¹⁴

The brochure contains also an outline for the realization of his plan, the principal point of which is the formation of a central body of representatives which shall locate a territory and initiate the movement. He does not designate the land and does not insist on Palestine, for to him that land has only a religious value, and Judaism, he thought, can be observed even in another land. The outline of the plan is general, and unlike Herzl, he does not enter into details. One point, though, deserves notice and this is his insistence that the soil of that territory should be owned by the entire people and not become private property. He thus foreshadowed the idea which was embodied in the National Fund of the Zionists. The contribution of Pinsker is that he was the first to give to the political aspect of the national idea a more concrete form than it was given by Hess and that he also supplied to Jewish nationalism a firmer sociological basis. It is still more to his credit that when his call for self-emancipation did not find the proper response, creating only a ripple in Russian Jewry which resulted in the limited *Hobebé Zion* movement, he did not disdain to undertake its direction, hoping to realize his plan in better times and under more suitable conditions. Moreover, he became convinced that Palestine is the only land which can stimulate the Jewish national will to action. He thus prepared the ground for the Zionist movement.

ii. Herzl who wrote his *Judenstaat* thirteen years after Pinsker was, as we have seen above (Sec. 114), entirely unaware of the existence of a predecessor who had proposed a solution to the Jewish problem similar to his own. He came to his conclusions uninfluenced by any earlier views. Yet there is much common ground between the two, though there are also differences. Having been a stranger to the complicated Jewish life and its inner problem in a still greater degree than Pinsker, he hardly understood that phase of it which, following Aḥad ha-'Am, we are wont to denominate the "plight of Judaism," and conceived solely the plight of the Jews, namely their suffering and their abnormal position in society and the body-politic. Nor did he delve into the essence of nationalism, for to him "a nation is a group of people who

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

possess a certain unity and whose unity is preserved by the existence of a general external animosity towards them.”¹⁵ He never troubled to define the content of that unity. He had a vague idea that religion is its principal factor, but no more. He was satisfied with the evidence supplied by life, namely that the larger part of the Jews feel that unity, to be convinced of the existence of a Jewish nationality and of its justification. His efforts were, therefore, concentrated upon the solution of the problem of the “plight of the Jews.”

The cause of that plight is, of course, anti-Semitism. Herzl believed in progress, but its rate of movement was too slow for him. “I do not forego,” says he, “the claim of righteousness to a leading place in society, but for the present, power and not righteousness rules social life.”¹⁶ The ground of anti-Semitism he judged to be primarily of an economic nature. The exile, he states, robbed the Jews of their economic and social balance. Having been forced to become urban dwellers and engage to a very large extent in commerce, Jews offer keen competition to their neighbors. Furthermore, the peculiar economic position creates extremes among them; the masses, on the whole, are very poor while individuals may amass excessive wealth, and in addition, they also produce a surplus of intellectuals who arouse opposition on various grounds. The result is an increased animosity. The rich dislike the Jews on account of their poverty and the poor because of their riches. He is, of course, not unaware of other elements in anti-Semitism, such as religious differences or inherited antipathy, but the economic factor is the principal one.

There is, therefore, only one solution, to establish a Jewish state whither the larger part of the Jews should emigrate, and thus by removing the cause, anti-Semitism will gradually disappear. This is the theoretical basis of the Herzlian idea of a restoration of a state as first propounded. It is not very deep nor is it above criticism, but as was already stated above, his great contribution to the national idea consisted not in the philosophical views, but in the method of presentation of his plan, his personality, indomitable will, and indefatigable efforts to turn his dream into a dynamic force in Jewish life.

119. CULTURAL NATIONALISM

i. Asher Ginzberg (1856-1927), the distinguished Hebrew essayist, more popularly known under his pen-name Aḥad ha-'Am, was gener-

¹⁵ *Judenstaat*, p. 4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

ally conceded to have been the father of the movement known as spiritual Zionism. There were others who expressed similar ideas, but none presented them in such a lucid and logically connected form as he. In fact, it is primarily due to his promulgation of this theory that he acquired such an important place both in Hebrew letters and in the intellectual circles of the younger generation.

This theory can be presented briefly as follows: The starting point—chronologically though not logically—in the reflections of Aḥad ha-'Am is the presentation of the Jewish problem as he saw it. "An ominous question mark," says our writer, "has appeared on the horizon of the Jewish people in our days, namely whether it can continue to maintain its unity and integrity in the future." This problem, continues Ginzberg, has three phases. First, there is the fear lest the people as a whole, scattered as it is throughout the world, will lose its national unity and break up into separate Jewries of different characters and natures. In other words, the Jewry of each land will be so moulded by its environment that there will be little resemblance between it and the rest of the Jewries except in a few general characteristics. The emphasis is here laid on the possibility of a resulting multiplicity of types of Judaism rather than on total assimilation, for Aḥad ha-'Am did not entirely despair of the Jewish will to live which was so potently manifested throughout history. He only feared the inclination to imitation which, like Pines (Sec. 117), he thought is strongly implanted in the Jewish soul. It is this imitation of different cultures which, according to his view, will ultimately split unified Judaism into a manifold. This phase of the problem, though, is grave but not dangerous. It may, however, lead to a more serious situation—which is the second phase of the problem—for with the lack of national unity the other destructive forces may come into play and endanger the very existence of the Jewish people. These forces are the weakening of the bond of religion and the continuous lessening of the national feeling, the glow of which is constantly diminishing in the hearts of the young who gradually attempt to escape Judaism and Jewish life. The threatened existence, however, must not be understood as the actual physical existence of individuals or groups of Jews, for as he said, Ginzberg did not fear total assimilation. It connotes primarily the existence of the Jewish people as a distinct entity. In other words, he fears atrophy of the spiritual powers of the nation, even if such atrophy will not cause its disappearance. This atrophy, he says, has already become evident in the loss of the

national ideal, which loss constitutes the third phase of the problem. In all periods of Jewish history the nation possessed an ideal which served as a goal to which it strove and which striving alleviated the miseries of exile. Such was the Messianic ideal. In the Modern Period, argues the essayist, this ideal either vanished or ceased to be a force in life. This constitutes what he calls the "plight of Judaism." The core of the problem is then how to revive the national ideal, invest it with a modern content so that it serve as a staying power for a scattered people and guard it from moral and spiritual decline.¹⁷

The solution to this problem he presented in a number of essays in which he attempts to determine the content of the national ideal and elaborate a plan for its realization. To the slogan, *Hibat Zion* (The Love of Zion), which was much in vogue in the circles of the nationalists in the early nineties, Aḥad ha-'Am attributes a different connotation than the ordinary. It signifies to him not a mere emotion as it was understood by the followers of the *Hovevê Zion* movement or even later by the Zionists, but the concentration of the national spirit and will upon the establishment of a spiritual center in Palestine not for the purpose of alleviating the plight of Jewish individuals or groups, but for the elevation of the nation as a whole.¹⁸ In this definition of the content of the term we have already the core of the plan for the revitalization of the national ideal or the solution to the problem. In fact there is a mutual relation between the two. According to the definition "the Love of Zion" is only a means for the establishment of that center. At times, though, the conception becomes an end in itself and the role changes; the center becomes the means for the development of that "love." He then identifies it with Judaism, as he says in one of his essays, "It," i.e. *Hibat Zion*, "is not a part of Judaism but the whole of it except that in its perfected form it requires a change of center. Its expression is a living desire for the unity of the nation, its renaissance and development in accordance with its spirit, but on general human principles."¹⁹ The significance of the last statement we will discuss later; for the present we will complete the expounding of the solution. The spiritual center, says the thinker, established in Palestine, which of course will have a considerable Jewish settlement as a periphery will develop an original Jewish culture and will thus solve the problem.

¹⁷ Introduction to Vol. I of his collected essays entitled *'Al Parashat Derakim* (On the Cross Roads) p. xvii, also p. 24.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

First, it will serve as a center of imitation for the Jewries of the Diaspora in many ways of life. Second, it will strengthen the national consciousness of the Jewries by supplying their spiritual life with true content.²⁰

It must be admitted that the way this brilliant essayist pictures the spread of the influence from Palestine to the Jewries of the Diaspora is very naïve. In the early days of his writing he thought that the mere existence of a number of Jewish colonies, or of an organized Hebrew press, or of several well-founded cultural institutions, will accomplish the purpose. The subsequent years during which the settlement in Palestine developed on a larger scale than ever imagined by Aḥad ha-'Am and yet did not become the desired center, invalidated many of the imaginary features of that phase of the solution of the Jewish problems proposed by Ginzberg. Still there is a sound kernel in the theory of a spiritual center.

Thus far the problem and its proposed solution; but this solution is far from complete unless we further elucidate the content of the national ideal which is to form such an important factor in the Jewish renaissance. This, in turn, cannot be understood without Aḥad ha-'Am's views on nationalism in general and Jewish nationalism in particular as well as his conception of Jewish history. We thus come to the speculative basis of Ginzberg's cultural nationalism.

In the formation of his speculation, Aḥad ha-'Am was greatly influenced by the English and French positivist philosophy as well as by the sociological-psychological theories of the age. Following John Stuart Mill and partly Renan, he asserts that a nation, like an individual, possesses a distinct "ego" or "I." This ego, in its manifold, consisting of numerous characteristics, persists in the nation throughout its history, while the individuals constituting it pass away successively. This national "I," or as it was called early in the nineteenth century the "spirit of the nation," resembles greatly the individual "I." Like the latter, which contains the sum of all the experiences of a person together with his aspirations, hopes, and strivings, so does the national "I" include the sum of all the experiences of the nation, on the one hand, and its hopes and aspirations, on the other hand. In other words it is the meeting point of past and future.²¹ The national "I" is, according to our thinker, not a mere abstraction, but a real entity, endowed with the faculties and qualities of all living entities, the most elemental of which

²⁰ Ibid., p. 177 also Vol. IV, p. 95.

²¹ Vol. I, p. 158.

is the will to live, or speaking in Darwinian terminology, the struggle for existence. It is this will to live, or at times, as he calls it, the instinct of the nation for its preservation, which is the prime factor in the history of each nation. The various manifestations of the life of any national group in the course of its existence are to be interpreted in the light of the activities of this instinct. In other words, the numerous expressions of the national life during the ages are to be viewed as means for one purpose, namely the continued existence of the nation.²²

Applying these theories to an interpretation of Jewish history, he evolved a view which deviated greatly from the earlier philosophies of that history, and which is distinguished by its secularism. The Jewish religion, says he, though it is undoubtedly one of the most important expressions of the Jewish spirit, yet is not, as many scholars thought, identical with Jewish nationalism, but in reality only a means for the preservation of the people. The numerous precepts and commandments of the law are merely instruments of protection employed by the national instinct for preservation in order to enable the people to withstand the storms and attacks from without. He goes even further and declares that the very denial of Jewish nationalism coupled with the mission theory propounded by the Jews of Western Europe during the nineteenth century served as a means for the preservation of the nation. He justifies this rather curious assertion by the following explanation. The changed conditions of Jewish life in Western-European countries in modern times abolished all Messianic hopes for the future, and also undermined the very foundations of the practical religion which served as a barrier against assimilation. A part of the Jewish people was then threatened with the possibility of actual disappearance. In order to obviate this danger, the leaders of Western Jewry, moved unconsciously by the will to live of the nation, then propounded their theory, declaring the Jews a distinct religious group possessing a high mission, for the sake of which the integrity of that group must be preserved. Thus, while formally these leaders denied nationalism, in reality by preserving the distinctness of the Jewish group, they served the cause of the national will to live.

Removing thus the Jewish religion from the high pedestal on which it stood and subjecting it to the all-powerful instinct for national preservation, he defines the national renaissance he advocates "as a live and actual desire for the unity of the nation and its free development in ac-

²² Vol. IV, p. 100.

cordance with its spirit, based on general human principles."²³ The secularism of Aḥad ha-'Am's theory of nationalism is then quite evident.

From this definition of the national renaissance, it may be concluded that what the thinker advocated was a national life distinguished by the possession of such attributes as a national language, literature, and territory. But the definition contains also in the phrase "development in accordance with the spirit of the nation" an additional condition and qualification of this renaissance and forces one to further define the essence of that spirit. Besides, Aḥad ha-'Am spoke only of a spiritual center in Palestine which implied that the majority of the Jews would remain in the Diaspora, and this majority must have, as stated, a national ideal for the continuation of its integrity. What then is this ideal? Ginzberg was then compelled to further define the term national spirit or national genius which he employed for a time as a kind of *deus ex machina* and supply it with content.

The essence of the Jewish spirit, says he, is primarily of an ethical nature, namely the fundamental element in the character of the Jewish people is an inclination to realize in its life the ideal of ethical perfection. In fact, the very strength of the Jewish spirit in all times had its source in the strong belief of the people in its ethical mission and in its duty to realize it in life."²⁴ The central conception of that moral view of life is absolute justice, which endows every man with a distinct value, and makes no distinction between the self and the other. It is this conception which was so strongly emphasized by the prophets of Israel.

Our author, however, does not stop with this limited definition of absolute justice, for it is too individual and is really borrowed from Kant, and he therefore widens it saying that the Jewish spirit strives not only to realize that justice in life in regard to the individual but to bring about moral perfection, first for the people as a whole, and ultimately for humanity.²⁵ This then is the national ideal, namely "to strive to widen the content of Jewish nationalism so as to make it a noble comprehensive idea as well as an ethical ideal, the center of which is love of Israel, and the periphery includes every virtue and esteemed characteristic."²⁶

²³ Ibid., Vol. I, 96.

²⁴ Vol. II, p. 74.

²⁵ Vol. IV, pp. 44-46.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

Making thus ethical perfection the principal feature of both the Jewish spirit and the national ideal, Ginzberg stumbled upon a difficulty which threatened to undermine his view of a secular nationalism. The question arose, are not Jewish conceptions of ethical conduct firmly rooted in the Jewish religion, and consequently, can one make ethical perfection the essence of the national ideal without at the same time including also religion in that essence? To obviate this difficulty, he propounded his theory of national ethics. The basis of this theory is the social origin of the ethical feeling propounded by English social thinkers, such as Spencer and others. The origin of the moral feeling, says Ginzberg, is the natural social inclination and only after it is already developed to a certain degree is it absorbed by religion. From this absorption conflict ensues, for religion, due to its conservatism, guards the forms of conduct of a lower stage of social development, while ethics itself continues to develop and the moral sentiment reaches higher states. The result is, at times, a change in religious conceptions and a reinterpretation of earlier commandments in accordance with the changed ethical notions. Viewing the origin of ethics and its consequent development independently of religion, though often helped by it, it follows that ethics more than any of the elements of the culture of a people is stamped by the national spirit, and there is, therefore, a national ethics which obligates the members of a people to observe its commandments irrespective whether they are religious or not. That some of these commandments are identical with religious precepts, as the case is in Judaism, is irrelevant.²⁷ The main purpose of Aḥad ha-'Am was to prove that the national ideal is secular and not necessarily religious.

The result of this discussion is that the spiritual center which must be established in Palestine in order to save the Jewish people from the dangers threatening it will also be instrumental in the renaissance of the Jewish spirit to such a degree that it will become a vigorous moral force in the life of the people as a whole, scattered as it is, and gradually in that of humanity. Aḥad ha-'Am thus indirectly reintroduced the mission idea propounded by the leaders of the Reform movement but gave it a different connotation. While the former believed that this mission can and must be carried out in the Diaspora, he, like Hess before him—it is curious that he does not refer to Hess—

²⁷ Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 79-90, and also Vol. I, pp. 92-100.

insists that this mission can be realized only when a part of the Jewish people will be concentrated in Palestine.

This is, in brief, the outline of Aḥad ha-'Am's national philosophy which he developed extensively and applied to the elucidation of many practical problems of the day as well as of important historical, theological, and literary questions. In fact, much of the contribution of Ginzberg to modern Jewish thought consists in the application of the principles rather than in their originality. Still it would be beyond the scope of the work to follow the thinker in his attempted elucidation of problems and questions, some of which were only of ephemeral importance, and this survey will suffice.

There is, however, one more point in his speculation which deserves to be noted, as it has the ring of originality and served him as a support in his opposition to political Zionism. This is his explanation of the antagonism to the Jew persisting even in modern times. Unlike Pinsker, who gave as its basis the psychological factors of fear of an indefinite nation and of the disrespect for a group of an inferior political position, and unlike Herzl, who made economic competition its reason, Aḥad ha-'Am assigns to it a different cause. It is the conciliation which frequently takes place in the human soul between two contrary sets of ideas, a phenomenon which we often meet both in the life of the individual and of the group. Citing a number of cases where individuals displayed a kind of double personality, he concludes that hatred of the Jew which is primarily the heritage of past religious fanaticism can continue along with progress and liberal ideas. It is simply the power of the unconscious which crops up even in the heart of the liberal European and makes him dislike the Jew though he cannot offer any reason for it. Accordingly, no Jewish state will remedy the plight of those Jews who will remain in the Diaspora and Herzl's Zionism is thus robbed of its main props. Ginzberg overlooked, though, the fact that this theory simultaneously militates against his own view of the Jewish mission, for if that animosity will persist, how can even an exemplary moral life lived in the Palestinian center influence peoples hostile to the Jews and their theories? What we may say in defense of Aḥad ha-'Am is that while it is possible for ideas of the past to live for a long time in the present, they may not continue to do so forever, and by long struggle and effort a complete change in human conceptions may be brought about.

It is likewise beyond the scope of this work to enter into a detailed

critical discussion of these views and test their validity and permanence. We will merely point out a fundamental flaw in their reasoning. This is that, in spite of Ginzberg's emphasis upon evolution and empiricism, his whole conception of a national spirit and of a national ego or *I* possessing a will to live, both of which are independent of the Jewish religion, is a purely hypothetical abstraction not supported by the experiences of the Jewish group. One may ask, if for three thousand years the Jewish people manifested its spirituality in the form of religious expression, is it then not possible to assume that religion is in reality the most essential element of the Jewish spirit? At any rate, it cannot be considered one instrument of preservation among many. Aḥad ha-'Am never considered this phase of Jewish history. Similarly, the ethicism which forms the content of the national ideal cannot be of a purely secular character, for throughout history it was always expressed in religious form, and who can guarantee that if the religious element, its stay in the past were removed, that it will not collapse altogether? The subsequent establishment of a Jewish settlement in Palestine, larger than Ginzberg had ever dreamed of, which has not yet become a spiritual center, also points to some flaws in the solution proposed by him for the plight of Judaism. Still, the speculation of the distinguished essayist forms a valuable contribution to Jewish thought. Not only did his views exert great influence upon his contemporaries and stimulated Jewish cultural activity for several decades, but they also contain a number of ideas which with some modification can become factors in a real renaissance of the Jewish spirit which unfortunately is still to take place in the future.

ii. A species of the current of cultural nationalism was the theory usually denominated "cultural-autonomy nationalism, or Diaspora nationalism" which, as noted above (Sec. 2), precipitated, in the first two decades of this century, a movement in certain circles of East-European Jewries. It was propounded by the historian, Dubnow, in a series of letters published first in the Russo-Jewish monthly, *Woskḥod* (The Dawn), during the years 1897-1902, under the title *Pisma o Novom i Starom Evreistve* (Letters about Old and New Judaism), and later issued with additions in a volume in 1907. The theory subsequently underwent modifications and assumed several varieties which will be noted below, but its purest expression is that of its earliest promulgator.

The starting point of Dubnow differs from that of Aḥad ha-'Am. Unlike the latter, who, writing in Hebrew for a nationally minded

reader, began with an analysis of the Jewish problem, the former, writing in Russian for assimilated circles, endeavors first to prove the claim of the Jews to nationhood. He begins with a description of the various stages through which national groups pass in the course of history. The first is the biological stage when all the members of the group belong to the same race and are of the same blood. The next is the politico-cultural when the group absorbs other elements and unites them to itself by means of territory, government, and values of a cultural nature. In the course of time there develops in that group certain cultural, social, and ethical ideals which together with historical memories and experiences form a kind of spiritual personality expressed in a national consciousness or in a national ego. This is the third or the spiritual stage, the highest. There are then in the world several types of nations, some which are united by territorial, political, cultural, and spiritual bonds; some which have lost their independence but live in one territory and maintain their culture and spirituality; and only one nation which has lost both government and territory, yet still exists as a nation—the Jews who form the purest type of a spiritual nation. Is this existence a historical miracle? asks the essayist. Nay, answers he. The Jews went through all stages in their history, but due to a number of circumstances, the spiritual element triumphed over the other elements and thus their peculiar type of nationalism which is no less distinct than other types was developed.

Dubnow does not devote as much space as *Aḥad ha-'Am* to the analysis of the essence of the spiritual nationalism of the Jews, but takes it more as an established fact corroborated by history. He points especially to the inner, though limited, autonomy which the Jews possessed in various lands in ancient and Mediaeval times as proof for the continuation of their national consciousness and the preservation of the national ego. It is only in modern times that this autonomy was given up, partly by external pressure as in the East-European countries, and partly as in West-European lands, voluntarily through assimilationist tendencies which were due to erroneous conceptions. It is this weakening of Jewish national life by the loss of that autonomy which constitutes the Jewish problem. The solution which follows is, that we must endeavor to re-establish the inner autonomy of Jewish life in the lands of the Diaspora.

However, the realization of such an attempt is not an easy matter, and even the theory needs clarification, for there are serious objections

to its acceptance arising both from the changed character of Jewish life and from external conditions. Dubnow proceeds to meet these objections by elucidating his conception of national autonomy. He is quite aware that for ages Jewish nationalism was identified with religion and is still identified with it by the Orthodox, and also that whatever autonomous Jewish life the Jews led in earlier times was mainly in form religious. Such a form can, of course, not be resuscitated in modern times, and when so many Jews have emancipated themselves from religious belief and observance of precepts, consequently not only the form of autonomy has to be changed but the very conception of nationalism. Dubnow admits such changes. In regard to Jewish nationalism he argues like *Aḥad ha-'Am*. It is, says he, not identified with Judaism which is only an element in it, though an important one. In its entirety Jewish nationalism constitutes a cultural-historical entity, containing besides religion other elements of an ethical, social, and philosophical nature. As such, it unites all Jews, whether religious or free spirits. It is interesting to note that Dubnow with all his striving to secularize the national idea drew the line at conversion, and excluded a converted Jew from the Jewish people. Similarly, he secularizes the form of the autonomy. The center of that autonomy, says he, must be transformed from the synagogue to the social community of a secular nature, which, however, should not exclude religious activities, but assume numerous other functions, such as social, educational, and political, and also possess certain legal prerogatives. These communities in each land should unite in a union and thus give the autonomy a wider scope, and finally, there should be an organization of the Jewry of the world represented in an annual world congress in which all parties in Jewry should participate and which should regulate all affairs which affect the Jewish nation as a whole.

He devotes much space to the external difficulties in the realization of such a plan. These are: the doubtful compatibility of Jewish autonomy with the patriotism and national aspirations of the peoples and governments of the lands in which the Jews reside; the fear that it will strengthen anti-Semitism; and the fact that in the Russian Empire at the time the Jews did not even possess civil rights. Not going into detail in presenting his arguments for the possibility of removing such difficulties, we may say that they were influenced by the political conditions of the time when the letters were written. The struggle of the many nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire for national au-

tonomy and the justification for such struggles by a number of social theorists, encouraged our writer in his belief that these obstacles will gradually be removed. He argues again and again that a nation is a natural spiritual union, while a state is a social organization for definite purposes which can include several nations. Consequently, the feelings of nationalism and patriotism on the part of the Jews as well as on the part of any national minority are not mutually exclusive, for the Jews are not a state in a state but a nation within a nation. He reiterates many times that the expression of national life on the part of a group is as natural and fundamental as that of the life of the individual, and therefore must ultimately be granted even in such countries where the Jews are still deprived of civil rights. It may require much struggle but it will come. He even asserts the compatibility of nationalism with internationalism.

Thus did the champion of Diaspora nationalism allay all objections to his plan, at least to his own satisfaction, and he expressed such a strong conviction of the feasibility of his plan that he considered the aims of political Zionism a Utopia as compared with it. Palestine, says he, can only be one Jewish center among many, though he concedes to it a certain superiority on account of its historical importance.

That the subsequent historical events proved the opposite, namely they justified to a degree the aims of political Zionism and demonstrated the Utopian character of Dubnow's theory is needless to point out. But even in its inner construction it displays great weakness, for in no place, did Dubnow, unlike Aḥad ha-'Am, supply the concept of the "national ego" with any definite content, but merely stated that it contains various elements, overlooking the fact that these elements may disappear under changed conditions. Nor did he elaborate any uniform program for this autonomy which was to be granted to a people living in many lands, under peculiar conditions, and subject to the influence of many cultures. He says in one place²⁸ that this national autonomy should embrace three phases: (a) local autonomy in administration of communities; (b) freedom of usage of their own language by the masses; and (c) the establishment of national schools beside the state schools. But no content is supplied to each of these phases. He did not determine whether the title, a national language, belongs to Hebrew or to Yiddish or to any other dialect which a Jewish group may use, or to all of them, nor did he take in consideration

²⁸ *Pisma*, p. 113, ff.

the differences which would arise among Jewries of the world even if such autonomy were granted, for in West-European countries, where the influence of the general culture upon the Jews is strong, they use no separate dialects. In their case, then, one of the phases of that autonomy would be entirely missing. Nor did he determine the program of the national school except in vague terms. These and many other flaws made the theory and the plan from its very inception more a pious wish by a loyal son of Israel than a solution of the Jewish problem. Still, as noted above, it did not pass without influence upon Jewish life, and furthermore, several of its features did strike root in Jewish life, such as the World Jewish Congress which is now in existence, but in such a modified and limited form that its very existence is a protest against the grand purpose which Dubnow assigned to such an institution. There are still some groups, one or two, in small East-European countries who profess a diluted variety of Diaspora nationalism and even make feeble attempts to realize it in life by maintaining a number of national secular schools.

iii. As noted by us in the introduction, the *Bund*, the largest socialistic organization in pre-War Russia was, after many struggles on the part of the more Jewishly conscious element within it, forced to incorporate in its program a plank for obtaining a national cultural autonomy for the Jews in a free Russia. Neither the content of the nationalism which the organization admitted to profess, nor the nature of the cultural autonomy it advocated were ever made clear. In fact, the leaders of that movement who were followers of the Marxian view of socialism, which placed cosmopolitanism as the creed of the proletariat, never retreated from that point of view and their profession of nationalism was more a means for propagating their ideas among the Jewish masses as well as for other practical purposes. It had little to do with the historical nationalism in all its forms, and at best it expressed itself in acknowledging the right of Yiddish to become the language of the masses and their means for cultural expression. The subsequent activity of the former leaders of the *Bund* under the Soviet régime when they directed the notorious activities of the *Yevsekzia* (initials of *Evreiskaya Sectzia*) in bitterly prosecuting every one suspected of Zionism or of love for Jewish tradition, proved the hollowness of the nationalism they had ever professed. There were, however, other Jewish socialist leaders who even in pre-War days had a more serious attitude towards nationalism. And after the War, when the

reestablished states of Poland and Lithuania were for a few years inclined to realize to a degree the minority rights clause imposed upon them by the Peace Conference, these with others who belonged to the radical groups were instrumental in creating a movement which aimed to organize Jewish life on cultural lines, primarily among the laboring masses. The center of that "national" life became Yiddish and a new movement sprung forth in Jewish life—Yiddishism. To the followers of this movement, the majority of whom are socialists, who emancipated themselves not only from Jewish traditions but from the whole ideology of historical nationalism, and are even opponents of Zionism, Yiddishism fills almost the entire content of their nationalism. It is by the cultivation of that language and by the creation of a secular culture in it that they hope to maintain a Jewish national life. The belief in that possibility did not fail them even when the few rights granted to the Jews by Poland and Lithuania were curtailed, for in these countries the ghetto, in the spiritual sense, was not abolished, and the Jews still lived in compact masses in large cities, and still possessed distinct forms of life, and consequently it was still possible to carry on a distinct cultural activity among the masses and call it national. The Yiddishists had their center of activity in the two East-European countries mentioned, but they also extended it to France where until recently a large number of Jewish immigrants have settled, and to this country. They thus form, at least for the present, a force in Jewish life, and we will, therefore, present a succinct account of the ideology underlying their activities as propounded by one of their leading thinkers, Hayyim Zhitlowski.

Zhitlowski joined the Jewish socialist movement in its early days, in the eighties of the last century, and from the very beginning he deviated from the Marxian standpoint on the question of nationalism and advocated the adoption of that principle by the proletariat. As early as the year 1892, he published a Russian brochure, *Evrey K'Euream* (A Jew to Jews) in which he urged the Jewish workers to participate in the Russian Revolutionary struggle as a national unit, and demand not only equal rights for the Jews but also national rights. He further enunciated that socialism and nationalism are not antagonistic but complementary to each other. This point of view he reiterated in numerous essays during several decades of literary activity. He never, though, attempted to define adequately the nature of nationalism in general and that of Jewish nationalism in particular, except in vague

terms. Nationalism is to him a fact. Humanity, says he, is divided longitudinally into nations, and latitudinally into economic classes, and each social group finds itself belonging both to a nation and a class. The proletariat, therefore, cannot extricate itself from its nationalism.²⁹ This nationalism he does not base on blood or social unity, nor does he believe in the existence of a national spirit or genius adapted for certain functions. He is satisfied that science has established the existence of differences in character and psychosis between nation and nation.

All this applies also to Jewish nationalism. He assumes its existence without paying attention to its past expression in history. Not only does he secularize it but carries the secularization to extremes. Unlike Dubnow, he draws no line of demarcation and a Jew, in his view, can belong to the Jewish nation even when he professes Christianity. In fact, he advises a complete break with the past and all its values.³⁰ To him the present is sufficient, namely the fact that there exist Jewish masses different in character, inclinations, and temperament from other groups. Consequently, the Jewish proletariat in their struggle for freedom must include in their demands also that of national freedom, namely, the right to develop culturally according to the national character.

However, at this moment, the problem becomes complex. Zhitlowski is quite aware that the Jewish people, scattered as it is among the nations, differs greatly from other national groups and the economic position of its proletariat is also different because of the peculiar economic life of the Jew. Besides, there is also the problem of anti-Semitism with which even proletarians and socialists of all peoples are often inoculated, and which, according to him, can be solved neither by assimilation, nor even by socialism, at least for a long time, until its complete realization. Anti-Semitism, according to the essayist, has its main reason in the economic and intellectual competition of the Jew, which due to his lack of territory and economic position, is more keen and is looked upon with great disfavor. Hence, assimilation which brings the Jew more and more in contact with economic and cultural conflict with the other elements of the population only increases animosity toward him. All these factors make the Jewish question very complicated.

²⁹ Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 65 ff.

³⁰ Ibid., Vol. VII, p. 27.

In attempting to offer some kind of solution to the problem, Zhitlowski did not always follow a straight line and often made deviations. In his earlier essays, he wavered between opposing the socialist-Zionist party, the *Poalé Zion*, for their coöperation in national work with the bourgeoisie, and permitting the Jewish proletariat to interest themselves in affairs affecting the entire Jewish people.⁸¹ He admitted, though, that a feeling of solidarity between the proletariat of an oppressed people and the bourgeoisie is necessary and natural. Later, under the stress of events in Jewish life during the War, his view changed. He came to the conclusion that even a territory is an absolute necessity for the proletarians as for the other strata, for only in their own land can the Jewish group develop freely, and furthermore he raised no objection to Palestine as the supposed territory. But still that did not mean Zionism, for to that movement he objected. He opposed its entire ideology; its connection with the romantic past, its advocating Hebrew as the national language, its attributing to the Jews a Semitic spirit. The Jews to him are no more distinctly Semitic, but Ari-Semitic,⁸² a kind of peculiar national amalgam. The territory is only valuable inasmuch as it will afford a free development of a general human culture in accordance with the Jewish character whatever it may be.

However, with all the insistence of Zhitlowski in several of his essays—written under the influence of the Balfour Declaration—on the necessity of a territory, it does not, in his view, form the crux especially since the settlement of Palestine remained under Zionist control; Diaspora nationalism remains, therefore, the center of his thoughts. His solution to the Jewish problem in dispersion is a twofold one, economic and spiritual. He advises the Jews to turn their economic activity to such spheres in which competition is less keen, such as agriculture in all its phases. This, says he, will weaken anti-Semitism. The second phase of the solution is what the essayist calls the spiritual revolution, namely an effort to win back the Jewish intellectuals for the people and to develop a Jewish culture. In this term lies the culminating point of his view. A Jewish culture means to him primarily a general culture in Yiddish. Breaking as he did with the past and with its entire scale of values, the Yiddish which is spoken by a large part of the people is to him the great factor of that culture. He advocates, therefore, the introduction of a system of education from the public

⁸¹ See *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, pp. 127, 140.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 241.

school to the university with Yiddish as the language of instruction and, of course, an intensive and extensive literary activity in that tongue. This cultural life, he claims, would also lessen anti-Semitism, for it would diminish intellectual competition, as Jewish intellectuals would find satisfaction and room for creativeness in their own ranks.

These are, in brief, the principles of this type of nationalism as championed by the Yiddishists. That it contains Utopian elements in the phase of the economic revolution is needless to say. The Jewish situation, not only under the present aggravated conditions, but even in normal times, proves the impossibility of turning the Jewish masses, or even a large part of them, into agricultural pursuits in the lands of dispersion. Consequently, Zhitlowski's plan remained only a pious wish and a *desideratum* if it could only be carried out. The case is different with the cultural phase. Here there is a basic error and confusion of thought.* Not only do these naïve radicals think it possible to isolate one moment in the life of a people whose history extends for thousands of years and build upon it a future culture, the development of which will be attended by fierce struggle, but they take only a part of the people and call its life national. Yiddish is spoken only by the Jews of Eastern Europe, and that number becomes constantly less, due to political changes, on the one hand, and the process of adaptation to the general culture, on the other hand. The number of Yiddish-speaking Jews in this country, which is still large for the present, is constantly diminishing, and even granting that the language may not entirely disappear, yet it would be naïve to expect the development of a culture on such a slender basis. Besides, how can a general culture be developed in Yiddish when the elements of such culture are imparted by compulsory education almost in all lands at present? There is no need to point out many more errors in such a view; its Utopian character is evident.

It must, of course, be understood that this Yiddishist movement has variations and Zhitlowski's views are not completely representative. Undoubtedly in Poland and Lithuania, the centers of its activities where the Jewish masses live characteristically Jewish lives, the movement is somewhat closer to the Jewish spirit, but the basic view of the leaders of the movement is little different. It is a conscious and unconscious desire of intellectuals who, for one reason or another, have divested themselves not only of tradition but of the most important Jewish values and have little affinity with Judaism even in its broadest con-

notation, but being Jews, and feeling the lack of content of their Jewishness, took refuge in Yiddish and out of this single element want to construct a "complete" culture. That some of the Yiddishist intellectuals and literati produce works which are contributions to Jewish culture no one desires to deny nor can one minimize the typically Jewish spirit with which Yiddish is permeated. But to call Jewish nationalism a view which posits that language to be the principal factor in Jewishness at a time when only half of the Jewish people understand it, is preposterous.

120. *THE QUASI-RELIGIOUS TENDENCY* (M. BUBER, A. D. GORDON)

The nationalistic philosophies or types of thought hitherto expounded sought a solution either for the plight of the Jews or that of Judaism and their purpose was to maintain the integrity of the Jewish people, to endow it with the external attributes of a nation, and to afford it the necessary conditions for free creativeness of spirit. Some emphasized one aim and some another. But there were several thinkers to whom such ideals of the national movement were not broad enough. They wanted more and demanded that this national restoration should be realized in terms of a renaissance of the Jewish spirit which should affect not only the group but the individual Jew. In other words, they wanted to introduce into that movement a note of religiosity not in the traditional sense, but in the psychological connotation which should leaven the whole life of the individual Jew and ultimately of the group and transform it into an exalted and noble type of life in which the ideals of a striving humanity and a striving Judaism should not be only merged but identified.

i. Martin Buber (1878) who was an important factor in arousing the Jewish consciousness of the younger generation of Jews of Germany and the neighboring countries during the first two decades of this century, gave expression to one phase of this tendency. In his book, *Drei Reden über das Judentum* (Three Speeches on Judaism) and in numerous articles and essays later collected in two volumes under the title, *Die jüdische Bewegung* (1920), he advocates a form of national revival permeated by a spirit of religiosity.

Buber who is both a poet and a thinker does not present his views in a systematic way nor are they given in any form of logical reasoning. They are more assertions of an overmastering feeling and intuitive

thought. Disentangled from the emotional and prophetic elements, their substance is as follows.

Every person possesses two feelings of belonging to a certain group, one an objective and the other a subjective. The elements of the former are the attachment to the birth-place or native land, the common language, and the common form of life. Those of the latter is the force of the community of blood or the elemental heritage of the race which in reality forms the very substance of the spiritual *I*. With most people the objective and the subjective feelings coincide. The case is, of course, different with the Jew. Buber, however, thinks that the racial or national heritage forms the fundamental stratum in the soul of the individual and cannot be dispensed with. The problem of the Jew in dispersion is then how to harmonize between the two feelings, in other words, to assert his Jewishness and make it an effective force in his life in spite of his environment, for otherwise, since the heritage of the nation forms the very substance of the soul of the Jew, his life will be unreal and will not express his inner essence. Buber, therefore, issues his call to the young generation of Jews not only to follow or join the Jewish national movement, but to live a thoroughly Jewish life and to harmonize the dualism in their souls.

Unfortunately, however, Buber did not elaborate any program to show the way to the young Jews how to realize this harmony, but instead proceeds to demonstrate the value of Judaism as an ideal striving and the necessity of making it a principle of a higher life. Judaism, says he, is a complicated affair and is a polar phenomenon. In general, the life of any man and group presents a dualism, each member of which can be composed of many elements, but in no other group was the consciousness of this dualism so strongly felt as in the Jewish. The story of the fall of man narrated at the very beginning of the Pentateuch symbolizes this consciousness. This awareness of the dualism is the cause of the Jewish striving for unity. The Jews evolved the idea of the unity of God; they taught ethical unity in the human soul; insisted on unity of their people; and finally their prophets taught the unity of humanity. It is this striving which endowed them with creativeness. But in the dispersion their creativeness has become dormant and is threatened with atrophy. The moment has then arrived for a renaissance. But the renaissance of the group cannot take place unless there is a renaissance in the life of each Jew who must make the ideals of the nation his own in his individual life. It is the insistence upon

the revival of the Jewish spirit in the individual Jew or Jewess which is the new note introduced by Buber.

What then are the ideals or principles of Judaism? The first is the above-mentioned striving for unity in life, both in that of the individual and the group; the second is the emphasis on action; and the third, the visualizing of a better and glorious future. Action, though, must be understood not as mechanical, but as one permeated with a spirit and purpose; in other words, it must be sanctified so that every action becomes a form of religious worship. It is the good intention which is the soul of the deed and which imparts value to the act. In the course of time this idea lost much of its exaltedness, for religion became mechanical and the soul of the law fled while the letter remained. The idea of the glorious future for humanity as a whole also played an important role in Judaism and formed an elemental force in its world and life views. It also weakened in dispersion. It is the revival of these three ideas as forces in both the life of the individual Jew and the group which constitutes the renaissance of Judaism.

That such a renaissance cannot be carried out in dispersion where the narrowness of life and spirit threaten to destroy every attempt at establishing a real national Jewish life, and that there is a need of establishing a Jewish center in Palestine seemed to Buber almost axiomatic. He hardly attempts to prove it but devotes many of his essays to the popularizing of Zionism with special emphasis on the spiritual aspect. On the whole, he enters little in the details of the creation of this center. His main interest lies in the change of life which this renaissance will bring about. That change must begin before the center becomes a reality, and to a degree in the lands of dispersion. In fact, it is this change which to Buber is tantamount to a religious revival endowed with emotional force which will make the establishment of that center possible. However, in dispersion this renaissance can have only its inception but cannot continue. It is in Palestine where it can be preserved and developed. From that center where a real culture will be created there will issue influences to the Jewries of the lands of dispersion which will have greater or lesser effect.

The contribution of Buber consists primarily, as already indicated, in the introduction of the emotional note of religiosity. The national renaissance must not only give a land or center to the Jews, but change their life and leaven their culture so that the ideals of Judaism become

active forces in the moulding of their future as well as the future of humanity. To this must be added his insistence on the necessary change in the life of the individual.

The nationalistic view of Buber underlies a kind of metaphysical-ethical view expressed by him in his book, *Ich und Du* (I and Thou). Extracted from all poetic and mystic expressions it is briefly thus: The world appears to man in a dual form conditioned by his dual attitude to it. This dual attitude is expressed by two pairs of words which are fundamental to the human language: *I* and *Thou* and *I* and *It* or *He* and *She*. The first denotes an intensified inner relation on the part of the *I* with the object called *Thou*; the second merely an experience, namely, the *It* is something that *I* experience, that *I* learn about, and determine its nature, limits, or utility. The world as experience belongs to the *I—It* attitude; the world as an inner relation is connoted by the *I—Thou*. These attitudes are distinguished in all three spheres of human life: life with nature, life with fellow-man, and life with spiritual entities. In that of the *It* attitude, the things, persons, and entities are objects to be analyzed, taken apart and described, but there is no mutual action. In the *Thou* attitude there is a mutual relation, the other meets the *I*. Moreover, the *It* attitude implies really a conception of past experience, for at the moment we begin to analyze the object facing us, the experience is already past, while in the *Thou* attitude, the other is always in our presence for we experience the relation intensely. The meaning of all this is that there are two kinds of life, one when man and the world in its three spheres are two different things and man merely reflects, calculates, and describes the objects, and the other when man intuitively is related to the world which reacts upon his own soul in a mutual way. The first kind of life results in science, conflict and clash between man and man, and in mechanical religion. The second, on the other hand, results in spiritual exaltation; man is elevated by communion with nature, loves his fellow-man, and is close to God, the Eternal *Thou* as Buber calls Him. The thinker admits that man cannot always live in an atmosphere of *I—Thou* attitude, but also says that without such moments in life man does not attain real human dignity. In other words, Buber calls for a deepening and spiritualizing of human life.

In the views and thoughts of this thinker there can be seen the influence of Hassidism, the movement in Jewry which he so much admired and the interpreter of which he became. He attempted to

secularize its essential teaching which can be summarized in one sentence: "Man is always in the presence of God, and the converse, God must always be present to man" (Vol. III, Sec. 7), and dressed it in modern garb. Of course, the God of Buber is not the God of the founders of Ḥassidism, but the tendency is one.

ii. Another phase of this type of national renaissance was expressed by A. D. Gordon (1856-1922). Gordon was a phenomenal personality. He passed the greater part of his life rather quietly in the capacity of an official on the estate of Baron Günzburg in the province of Podolia, Southern Russia. It was distinguished only by his educational activities in the Jewish community of a small town adjoining the estate. It was in 1904, at the age of forty-eight, that he suddenly broke with his old way of life, left his family and settled in Palestine, where for eighteen years he occupied himself, in spite of his not over-strong body, as an agricultural laborer in the colonies of Judea and Galilee. It seems that this change was the result of a gradually ripening view of life, and when it matured in the mind of Gordon, he acted according to its principles. During these eighteen years, he was the typical ideal pioneer in Palestine, and the moving spirit in the formation of the labor organization in that country, and by his devotion to labor, his simple life, and his love of his people as well as of humanity, he served as an inspiration to thousands of *Ḥaluzim* in their hard task of turning a semi-desolate land into a flourishing and productive one. During these years he not only labored, but taught and wrote in Hebrew numerous essays on various problems. These were collected in five volumes in 1918. Gordon, who was an autodidact, never mastered the art of writing nor the way of presenting his thoughts systematically, and as a result the relevant elements have to be extracted from the irrelevant. They can be summarized as follows.

To Gordon, like to Buber, and even in a greater degree than to the latter, there was no need of justifying the Zionist movement, for Jewish nationalism was a living fact. Influenced by the social theories which conceive humanity as an organism, he says that nations represent organs in the organic body of humanity, while the individual is only an atom or a particle of the plasm. Between the individual and the nation there stands the family corresponding to the cell in a living thing. The problem to him is mainly what form shall the Jewish national renaissance assume? He asserts that no real renaissance can take place except by a change in the attitude towards life which means

a change in the attitude of all the individuals of the group, or at least, in the beginning, in that of the creative spirits of that group. It is only when such a change will take place in all nations that evil in human life will be abolished and humanity will approach its goal—perfection. For the present, however, he is interested in the Jewish phase of the renaissance.

The change he advocates is primarily an ethical one. Gordon does not believe that man is evil by nature. In general, says he, there are two tendencies in the human soul, a narrow one, the ego-centric, and a wider one which strives to go beyond the ego, and both are natural to man. As an example of the second tendency, we may cite the love of the mother for her child which is an extension of her ego, for she really lives her own life in that of the child. In fact, it is a form of pleasure. The same can be said of other forms of higher pleasures which perfect the life of man. It is the development of the tendencies to such pleasures which constitutes the change of attitude towards life and which will make human life fuller and more extensive.

As the first step in that renaissance Gordon demands a change of attitude towards nature. Man must not only take from it but give and add to it by his labor. Nature, especially inanimate, must not be viewed from a utilitarian point of view, but man must participate in its creative activity and increase its beauty by his own labors. Next, Gordon asks for a change of values in the life of the individual; every member of a group must educate himself or herself to a fuller life, spiritual and intellectual. Then a change must follow in the life of the family, in the relations of husband and wife and parents and children. In all these, the principle of the full development of the life of each of the members must be guarded. Finally, the life of the nation must be renovated. The nation is not above laws of morality and has no special privileges. It must also strive to justice and truthfulness, and only then can a perfected humanity ensue. These are the elements of his conception of the renaissance in its Jewish aspect.

However, dreamer though he was, Gordon was aware that such changes in a nation, especially one like the Jews which for millennia was estranged from nature and lived under abnormal conditions, cannot be realized within a short time. He therefore addresses himself mainly to his brethren, the *Haluzim*, who displayed more idealism than the others. It is for them that he draws the practical conclusions. He lays great emphasis on the importance of the individual. If, says he, a higher

type of pioneers will develop who will come to Palestine not only for the purpose of renovating its soil but their own life along the lines stated, the complete renaissance of the people may ultimately come. Of all principal factors which go to make up that renaissance he emphasizes especially that of labor, actual physical labor which creates something from the materials supplied by nature, and man thus becomes a partner in creation. It is also the right of the Jews to labor which, in his view, will ultimately establish the Jewish right to Palestine. He does not forget, though, the nation as a whole, and he develops his thought further, devoting attention to the relation between nationalism and socialism. Nationalism is a cosmic element in human life. It is a result both of the influence of nature and the life experiences of the group. Socialism is a result of technicalism and industry. It is primarily materialistic and does not take account of spiritual renovation. A new type of national life, such as he visions for the Jews in Palestine, where creative work and closeness to nature will be important factors, will also straighten out many problems of class struggle and introduce a just order in society, but on condition that the individuals should develop their own lives along the principles mentioned, of which labor is the most important. There is, however, no program nor even an outline of that new national life. He only emphasizes two points, first, that the soil must belong to the nation as a whole, and second, the important role that agriculture in particular and labor in general must play in this revival. However, while he emphasizes the value of labor, he does by no means minimize the value of knowledge and culture. On the contrary, Gordon wants to revive the old Jewish ideal, *Torah li-Shemah* (Study for Study's Sake) as a form of expression and spiritual satisfaction, and declares that there must be no poverty of spirit.

There is a quasi-metaphysical substratum underlying his views on the renaissance of Jewish life in Palestine. In the relation of human life to the world, says he, there are two phases: the first is that of perception and knowledge, which phase is limited, for not everything can be perceived and there is much in the world which is hidden; the second is that of expression. Man wants to express himself, to expand his life in various directions though he cannot always give an adequate reason for his actions. The above example of mother love which causes the mother to sacrifice herself for the sake of the child is an illustration. Perception and knowledge gave men power over nature, but they en-

croached upon the expression of the soul of which religion is a fundamental form. When man became conscious of his distinction from nature, that was the beginning of religion, for he wanted to express himself and establish a relation with the mysterious power in nature. Religiosity then is an individual feeling, but religion as an institution is social, and as the development of the group is slower than that of the individual, religion became petrified. A condition of the renovation of human life is the revival of religiosity in the heart of man. This can be accomplished by a life of expression, namely man should express himself in work, in understanding nature, and in living in harmony with it. Such a life, says Gordon, has in it more religion than that of the organized type. This view is abortive and too brief, for he never elaborated any program for the realization of his dreams, but merely gave expression to thoughts and feelings which surged within his soul.

There is, of course, much of the Utopian in the reflections of this laborer-philosopher and little clarity, but still due to the ideal tone as well as to the force of the personality of the one who pronounced the views, they exerted for a time great influence upon groups of Palestinian youth, especially upon the pioneers. The view, as a whole, was given by the followers of Gordon the name, *Dat ha-Abodah* (The Religion of Labor).

B. RELIGIOUS-ETHICAL THOUGHT

121. HERMANN COHEN

With Hermann Cohen (1848-1918), the outstanding idealist philosopher of the period, founder of a philosophical school known as the *Marburger Schule*, Jewish thought turned once more, as in the preceding age, towards the universalistic aspect of Judaism. Cohen not only continued the efforts of his predecessors, Formstecher, S. Hirsch (Vol. III, Secs. 95, 96), and others, the representatives of the age of emancipation and Reform, to coördinate Judaism with the philosophy of the age and make its teachings a factor in the progress of humanity, but did more than that. He raised Judaism to the dignity of a philosophy and made its principles a fundamental and leading element not only in philosophical religion but in ethics, an element without which these two expressions of the human spirit lose their value. In fact, Judaism to him is the purest philosophical religion, and he, there-

fore, entitled his work, in which he expounded its principles, *Religion der Vernunft* (The Religion of Reason).

However, he did not arrive at this standpoint all at once but by gradual stages. It was developed during forty years of teaching (1873-1912) at the University of Marburg, thirty-seven of which as Ordinary Professor of philosophy—a distinction which few Jews attained even in pre-War Germany—and reached its fruition in the last six years of his life. His great love for the heritage of his fathers, displayed in his Jewish writings, similarly underwent a process of development which is partly explained by the course of his life.

As a son of a cantor in a small Jewish community, Cohen received a well-grounded Jewish education. His father, in fact, destined him for the Rabbinate, and after he graduated from the Gymnasium, he attended for several years the Breslau Rabbinical Seminary. But he gave up that career and devoted himself wholly to philosophy in which he soon gained distinction so that he was appointed in 1873, at the age of twenty-five, *Privat Dozent*, at Marburg, and three years later Ordinary Professor. The circle in which the young teacher moved was saturated with a genuine spirit of liberalism which facilitated his complete identification with the German nation, spirit, and culture. His Judaism then retreated into the subconsciousness of his soul. A change came at the end of the seventies when the famous German historian, Treitschke began to attack Jews and Judaism. Cohen wrote a defense of Judaism in several long letters to the historian which he asked him to publish in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* where the attacks were made, but his request was not granted. He then published in 1880 his brochure, *Ein Bekenntniss in der Judenfrage* (A Confession in the Jewish Problem), in which his Jewish consciousness displays its early stirrings, though in a quite unsatisfactory form, for in it the writer hopes for the ultimate assimilation of the Jews. The brochure consequently called forth much opposition from the Jews. Cohen himself, though, dated this year as the year of his *Teshubah*, his return to Jews and to Judaism and the beginning of his interest in their problems. The return though was slow. The philosopher was engaged in completing his system, and during the twenty years that followed the publication of this brochure, only one more essay on a Jewish subject was written by him. The essay, *Die Nächstenliebe im Talmud* (The Love of Fellow-Man in the Talmud), was written in 1888 in reply to a query

of the Circuit Court in Marburg, whether the views and laws of the Talmud are binding upon all believing Jews, and whether the Talmud allows Jews to cheat and rob the Gentiles? Cohen gave a splendid defense of the Talmud and elucidated its noble ethics. It is from the year 1901, after he published the second part of his system, *Die Ethik der reinen Vernunft* (Ethics of Pure Reason), in which he integrated the Jewish God-idea, that his interest in matters Jewish became greater and constantly deepened with the corresponding deepening of his Jewish thought. It is in the last eighteen years of his life that almost all his essays on Jewish subjects and on the principles of Judaism were written. These were collected by his friends and published in three volumes in 1924 under the title *Jüdische Schriften*. It was also during the last years of his life that the final work, *Die Religion der Vernunft*, which is an exposition of Judaism, was written and in which his constantly ripening interest in and love for Judaism found its complete expression.

The changes in his relation to Judaism corresponded to changes in his thought. The philosophy of Cohen is not only deep and intricate, but is also made more difficult by his style. It would be, therefore, presumptuous to undertake to give an exposition of his thought, besides that such an exposition would be out of place in a work of this kind. We will, therefore, point out only a few principles which will elucidate the fundamental conceptions of his philosophy of Judaism. Cohen began as an interpreter of Kant, and his philosophy is often labelled as neo-Kantianism, but in reality, while it is close to Kant's views, it goes much beyond the theories of the master. In his works devoted to the exposition of Kant, there is already noticeable some deviations from the teachings of the former. When the first part of his own system, *Die Logik der reinen Vernunft*, appeared, the difference became evident. Unlike Kant, who considers the world a series of phenomena as conceived by the mind only while the things in themselves, i.e., their actual reality, can never be known, Cohen teaches the reality of our experiences, but not in the sense of the realists. Like all idealists, he lays great stress upon the ideas of the mind, which in themselves are independent of experience, and he therefore assigns thought an important function in the moulding of the very essence of experience. The objects which we conceive as things are not, as the realists say, altogether independent of thought. It is only after thought

supplies them with the logical conditions of their being that they become to us *things*. In other words, thought is a factor in the creation of things.

It is this deviation from Kant, in assigning an important role to experience, which influenced the entire philosophy of Cohen, especially his ethics and its relation to religion. Like Kant, he teaches that the goal of ethics is the ideal, namely that which ought to be, and like him, he assumes that the essence of morality is the idea of universality of the law which determines the will to action. In other words, the action must contain logical truth applicable to all conditions. But while with Kant, the whole formulation of ethics is of an abstract character, Cohen emphasizes the necessity of the realization of ethics. Morality must become a reality, and since it can be realized only in the world of nature, there must be then a unity between the two worlds, that of nature and morality. This unity is supplied by the God-idea. The God-idea is not postulated as in Kant from the necessity of harmonizing between morality and happiness, namely that it is God who makes the world of nature agree with the whole of the being of man, but is grounded in the very essence of morality. Morality, as said, has for its object the "ought," and as such, it always aims at the future, and is eternal. Consequently, if it is to be realized in nature, nature also must be eternal. It is then the God-idea which conceives that Being as eternal and also as the ground of nature which guarantees the eternity of the latter. And not only does it guarantee the eternity of nature but also of man, the bearer of the will to act morally. God must then be transcendent, that is be outside of both the world of nature and that of morality, for He guarantees the connection between the two as well as their stability, for the two worlds are not identical but co-existent.

Cohen thus incorporated in his ethics the two fundamental principles of Judaism, the existence of God and the Messianic idea, which in its essence is a striving towards the future, the very elemental characteristic of morality. At this stage in his thinking, however, the God-idea is still more of an abstract nature, and as with Kant, only an auxiliary to ethics, and there is always the danger that religion may ultimately disappear in ethics. He then makes a further step and attempts to endow religion with a particular substantiality having a permanent value of its own. The ideal of ethics as such, says he, has for its object the morality of humanity as a whole and not of the

individual. In the practical way it is supposed to be realized in the state, and then in a union of states, which will constitute all humanity. It is the emphasis upon the individual which religion and especially Judaism supplies. Religion teaches the correlation between God and man. Man trusts in God, turns to Him in his moments of need, and God hears his cry. It is not humanity to which God is related but to the man of reality, the individual who suffers and feels. This feeling of suffering moulds man into a personality, which in turn evolves the concept of the *Thou*. As long as man still thinks of his fellow-man as a *He*, a concept which does not contain close personal relation, there can be no real morality. It is only when he becomes a *Thou*, that real morality begins. This concept of the *Thou* is furnished by religion which inculcates both mercy and love. Just as the individual man expects this attitude from God towards himself, so does he learn to apply the same to his fellow-man who is no more a *He* but a *Thou*. Furthermore, the consciousness of sin inculcated by religion furthers the feelings of mercy and love for fellow-man, for man recognizes his own weakness, and consequently, is ready to pity the other man and not justify his suffering as a result of his own acts, and as he himself looks to God for mercy, he learns to have mercy on others. Thus it is religion, through these conceptions which are entirely its own, which makes real moral conduct possible, corrects the one-sidedness of ethics, and supplies to it both fulfillment and practical reality. It can, therefore, not disappear in ethics, for then morality can never be realized in life and will remain a Utopia. These qualities of religion Cohen finds primarily in Judaism. It is this religion which enunciated them through its prophets and teachers, and which still teaches them in their purity. And it is from the point of view of these principles that he expounds Judaism and views it as the religion of reason and as an integral element of philosophy. The gist of his exposition is as follows.

The God-idea of Judaism, as enunciated by the prophets, posits God not only as one, but as unique, namely that He is absolutely distinct from all other beings of nature, and there is no comparison between Him and them in any way—in other words, He is the absolute Being. He thus becomes the ground of the world and all other entities have their source in Him, from which follows necessarily the idea of creation of both nature and man. The Bible teaches further that God revealed Himself to man, but since He is unknowable, for the prophets insist constantly on the inability of man to know the nature and essence

of God, revelation consists in the imparting of His teaching to man. This is the essential Jewish conception of revelation. This revelation can be considered the second creation of man, inasmuch as it endowed him with moral reason.

Out of the idea of creation there follows the right and proper idea of man. Since all men were created by Him, their equality and worth is a necessary corollary and hence the injunction: "Thou shalt love thy fellow-man⁸⁸ as thyself," (Lev. XIX, 18), which means *he* is like thyself. Thus, says Cohen, monotheism views the history of humanity as the history of a moral society. Since this type of love of fellow-man is in essence a difficult matter and is attained only after much endeavor, Judaism guides man to it by a number of preliminary steps, the most important of which is a noble attitude towards the stranger, as it says, "Ye shall love the stranger." (Ibid., 16). By this command the political difference between the native Israelite and the foreign sojourner is removed. The next step is the emphasis upon friendliness toward the poor. It was fortunate for Judaism, says Cohen, that it, as a religion, developed within a state, and was so intimately connected with the social problems, the leading of which is the difference between poor and rich. The poor then became the object of laws which regulated life in the body-politic. The purpose of all these laws is to arouse pity and sympathy for the suffering fellow-man. It is this sympathy which will ultimately lead to real love of fellow-men. This love, as said, presupposes much training on the part of man, and the training is supplied by the laws regarding the poor. These laws, while they do not make away with private property, yet limit some of the rights of the owner and compel him to share it with the propertyless; such are the laws of tithes, the right of the poor to glean the leavings of the grain in the corner of the field, and finally the Sabbath and the Jubilee year. The latter, as is well known, does away with permanent property rights when secured by purchase, and aims to guard against the rise of a propertyless class. The former, says Cohen, enunciates a still higher principle, namely, the equality of all men, no matter what their status in existing society may be. The Sabbath enjoins rest, not only for the master and his family, but also for his man-servant and maid-servant, indicating that while there may be a difference in the degree of wealth and even of freedom, there is a fundamental right of man which can-

⁸⁸ Cohen refuses to translate *Rea* by neighbor or friend, for he sees no reason for limitation, since all men are created by God.

not be violated—it is the right to rest. All these laws indicate sufficiently the strict ethical nature of Jewish monotheism.

This essential nature of Judaism is embodied in the very God-idea. The prophets conceived God as the idea of the Good. Micah says: "He declared unto thee, O Man, what is good." (Micah VI, 8). In other words God promulgates morality, and as such He is its ground and prototype. The knowledge of morality is, therefore, the knowledge of God, for no other knowledge is possible. And as there cannot be any knowledge of morality without a knowledge of man, there is consequently enfolded in the very God-idea a concept of His relation to man, so that in Jewish monotheism not God per se is the principal content but God in His relation to man. From this point of view we are also to understand the character of the divine law in Jewish monotheism. It is to be conceived not as an arbitrary commandment, but as instruction. In no way does the law relate to the nature of God Himself, but always to man. He is its bearer and its object, and he is to realize it; God is only the source and origin of that law. Jewish law displays its true character as a system of instruction and moral discipline by divesting itself from any inner relation to expected reward. It then becomes a duty, and it was even said: "The reward of a performance of a precept is the performance itself" (Abot IV, 5); in other words, the reward of a duty performed is the duty itself.

It is along these lines that we can discern the difference between Christianity and Judaism. In the former an attempt is made by dogmas and symbols to arrive at the essence and nature of God; in the latter, this is entirely excluded. God is completely transcendent, and man can only ask, like the Psalmist, for nearness to God, but not for unity with Him. The very correlation of God and man is conditioned by the correlation of man with fellow-man. God is the father of man and He instructs His children in the ways of the good, which aims at man as its object, but of which he is also simultaneously the bearer and subject. The idea of the good in Judaism produces, therefore, as a corollary the concept of humanity.

With such concepts as a basis, Judaism becomes a religion of reason, namely of ethical reason. It keeps aloof from mystical elements, and the very love of God means in reality knowledge of His teachings which in turn evolves the knowledge of fellow-man, for He instructs man in morality. As a result, there are in Judaism no mediators between God and man, nor is there any saint worship, for all Jews can

attain that knowledge, as it is said, "And ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests and a holy people." (Ex. XIX, 6). The imparting of such dignity to man enunciates his individuality and places upon him full responsibility for his actions. There is no original sin in Judaism, nor are children to suffer for the sins of their fathers. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel consistently fought against the latter conception (Jer. XXI, 29; Ezekiel, XVIII, 1). Ezekiel, especially, did not tire of emphasizing the responsibility of the individual for his actions. Consequently, redemption from sin can be accomplished only through the agent himself, namely by repentance and a change of the ways of life. It is true that this ability of man to atone for his sins is to a large degree conditioned by the forgiveness of God which belongs to Him as an attribute, and which is often expressed in the Bible as being the love of God for man; in no way is that forgiveness an act of grace alone, but always presupposes as a preliminary step the self-redemption of man by his own acts. From all these there follows the line of demarcation between Judaism and Christianity.

Beside the God-idea and all that it implies, there is another phase of Judaism, which equally expresses its purely ethical character; this is the Messianic idea, which guarantees the realization of the ethical ideal and supplies content and purpose to history. This idea which turns man towards the future implies in turn the ideas of progress, and by its very nature possesses a purely ethical character, for the domain of ethics is the "ought" as distinguished from the "is," which means, as indicated before, a perpetual striving for the improvement of the state of humanity. Cohen here endeavors to demonstrate that his rationalistic interpretation of the Messianic idea is the very one taught by Jewish tradition. Quoting the Talmud and Maimonides, both of which emphasize the difference between the *Yemot ha-Moshiah* (The Days of the Messiah) and *Olam ha-Ba* (The World to Come), he proves that not only is the prophetic view of the Messianic idea permeated with the spirit of this-worldliness, but even later tradition. It is true that the *Olam ha-Ba* conception is connected with resurrection and a supposed future change of the entire world order, but it is distinctly separated from the Messianic days, and as the quotation says, unknown. The kingdom of God of the Messianic days, on the other hand, has nothing of the other-worldliness in it, but is to be realized in this world. Moreover, it does not even imply complete realization but continued striving for perfection. The expression *Aharit ha-Yomim*

(End of Days) used by the prophets is not to be taken literally but merely as a distant goal to which man should continually strive, just as the conception of eternity in ethics is not mere extension of duration but perpetual continuation of the ethical will and its creativeness.

Cohen continues to outline the content of the Messianic idea as taught by the prophets and derives from it his own view of the meaning of Jewish history and the destiny of the Jewish people. One of its fundamental components is the ideal of peace. This implies, of course, the concept of an harmonious union of nations, a concept which turned the attention of the prophets from history to politics, and widened the horizon of monotheism into a universal religion. On the other hand, the prophets also saw the difference between groups of people within each nation, namely the cleft between the poor and the rich. This presented to them a problem, for does not poverty contradict the justice of God? They, therefore, spoke of a future when this difference will be done away with. For the present, they taught that riches is not a virtue, nor is poverty a just punishment for sins. On the contrary, say the prophets and with them the Psalmists, the poor are innocent and poverty is often the share of the pious. Even the Messiah will be poor previous to his revelation. Messianism then contains some element of the view which today we call socialism. Thus making suffering a means of realization of a great ideal, the history of Israel becomes clear to our thinker. Israel is the people that suffered more. However, suffering is not a tragic motive in its history, but a means for its preservation. It is a test of its devotion to the ideal and a means for the ennobling of its soul as well as a sign of its choice as the bearer of the Messianic ideal. The very dispersion of Israel is an element of his destiny. It signifies the emancipation of the Jewish nation from the state and the possibility of its being a people and even of possessing an individual nationality, though scattered. Zionism is, therefore, to Cohen a movement of regress in Jewish history. But what is more, he opposed it, rather curiously, but apparently logically from his point of view, on the ground of its impatience with Jewish suffering. Franz Rosenzweig tells in his introduction to Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften* that in a conversation with the philosopher about Zionism, the latter exclaimed vehemently: "But the fellows—i.e. Zionists—want to be happy."²⁴ In other words, he considered their striving for a state or a

²⁴ *Jüdische Schriften*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. XI.

national home as unjust and as opposed to the Jewish historical destiny of which suffering forms an integral part.

Thus far, Cohen dealt primarily with the ethical phase of Judaism which he, as seen, constitutes the essential part, but he also notices its strictly religious or practical phase. He finds its expression primarily in the Psalms. In these, the individual rather than humanity comes to the front; it is he who seeks both nearness to God and salvation or redemption from sin, and expresses his longing for them in the religious songs or prayers. This individualism which also evolves the *Thou*, completes the ethical idea and supplies it with fulfillment.

Cohen is conscious that Judaism has, besides ideas and views, also a complicated system of ceremonial laws, and he finally turns to the rationalization and idealization of this phase. The laws, says he, are symbols for ideas but they also have their own value. They do not aim at the isolation of Jewish life, but at its idealization, namely, the impregnation of worldly activities with divine spirit; they by no means imply a separation from culture, for Jewish isolation is merely expressed in the self-preservation of the group. The philosopher does not go into detail on this question of the law, and does not inform us as to how much of it should be kept or discarded and only emphasizes one point, the retention of Hebrew as the language of prayer. Prayer, he says, is the expression not only of the individual, but of the Jewish group, and moreover, it is the means for the expression of the fundamental ideas of the religion. It must, therefore, be recited in the original language which contains these ideas in their purity.

Viewing Cohen's philosophy of Judaism as a whole, we can say that while it is expressive of the view of the generation of emancipation and is to a large degree one-sided, yet it goes beyond the speculation of the predecessors, the representative thinkers of liberal or Reformed Judaism. It approaches, though unconsciously and much against his will, the view of a spiritual Diaspora nationalism. I said much against his will, for Cohen emphasized excessively and repeatedly the German nationality of the German Jews, and even wrote a long essay on *Deutschtum und Judentum* (Germanism and Judaism) to prove the closeness of the spiritual relation between the two. Yet, as stated above, he does speak of a Jewish nationality, though a stateless one. We are little enthused by his exaltation of Jewish suffering making it a part of the destiny of the people. It appears too much like a justification of the inevitable and resembles Nietzsche's conception of "slave morality."

Yet notwithstanding all these, his attempt to integrate the Jewish religious view into a philosophical system and raise it to the status of a life view, the basis of all ethical progress, is a noble one.

122. MORITZ LAZARUS

Another important contribution to Jewish religious and ethical thought of the period was made by Moritz Lazarus (1824-1903) who, like Cohen, occupied an important place in the German academic world. He held professorships at the German Military Academy and at the Berlin University and was together with Hayyim Steinthal the founder of the school of folk psychology. Lazarus, son of a Rabbi, received in his youth a sound grounding in Jewish studies and pursued them also in later years. He was always close to Jewish affairs, took a deep interest in them, and was the most distinguished lay representative of German Reformed Judaism, having presided at its Synods in the years 1869 and 1871.

In his *Ethik des Judenthums* (Ethics of Judaism) which constitutes his chief work in the field of Jewish speculation, Lazarus undertook to give a systematic presentation of the ethical view, principles, and teachings as taught by Judaism through the ages. It was the first attempt of its kind and thus far still remains the only one. He approached his task in the proper spirit for in the long chapter on the sources of Jewish ethics which opens his work, he repeatedly asserts that, while the Bible can be considered the text and source of Jewish ethics, it cannot be understood without the entire Jewish tradition, the chief exponent of which is the Talmudic and Agadic literature. It is the Rabbis who, in expounding and interpreting the words of the Bible and the teachings of the prophets, deepened their meaning and gave them that moral import which was reflected in the entire life of the nation through history. As a folk psychologist, he lays great emphasis upon the mind of the group and its continued activity, and it is from the traditional sources which reflect the expression of that mind that he wants to formulate the theory of Jewish ethics. His conception of sources is therefore wide, for he understands by that term not only written statements dealing explicitly with morality, but also law, poetry, history, and forms of life embodied in institutions. He further emphasizes that he plans to present the complete ethical view of Judaism which emanates from its entire spirit, though he is conscious of the difficulty which Jewish literature, and especially the writings of the

Rabbis, present in this matter. These writings, as is known, do not offer their teachings in a logical and ordered manner, but in variegated forms, at one time by a pithy saying, at another time by an allegory or legend, and frequently by a legal maxim. Yet he believes that the enunciation of the whole view of Jewish ethics is possible, for these single scattered utterances express the spirit of the fundamental principles and must be understood through them. Whether he succeeded in his task is a matter of individual judgment, and as we will see, he fell somewhat short of the mark but that he clarified the principal ethical conceptions of Judaism and presented them in an illuminating manner, of this there can be little doubt.

In spite of his assertion that the conception of Jewish ethics should be understood and deduced only from the Jewish point of view, he begins his formulation of that conception with a preconceived notion of the Kantian idea of the good, and attempts to adjust that of Judaism to it. He is well aware of the formal difference between the two, for he declares that Jewish ethics is primarily theological, namely that Judaism asserts morality to be a manifestation of divine law, and that God ordained these moral precepts, but still he asserts that it does in no way infringe upon the autonomy of ethics. "Not by divine commandment," says Lazarus, "does the moral become law, but because its content is moral, and it would necessarily, even without an ordinance, become law, therefore it is enjoined by God."⁸⁵ In other words, God gave the moral law, not because of His arbitrariness but because He, as the archetype of morality and its eternal symbol, necessarily ordained it. The essence of morality is independent of every dogmatic concept, and as Kant said, it is an objective norm which constrains man in action, as the laws of logic constrain his thought. The reason for morality lies in the very nature of man, "for he finds in himself an undeniable, inevitable fact, the impulse toward the good." The Bible, says Lazarus, states this view distinctly when it says concerning the Law, "It is in thy mouth and in thy heart that thou mayest do it." (Deut. XXX, 14). What Judaism improved upon this moral impulse is that it added sanctity to it by making it a divine command, which means that God typifies morality in His essence and is thus to be emulated by man. Lazarus admits that Talmudic Judaism considered any moral precept a religious one; still, says he, this connection does not take away the autonomy of morality. We have to conceive the

⁸⁵ *The Ethics of Judaism*, Eng. transl. Part I, p. 112.

moral law and commandment of God as inseparable but not identical.

Lazarus bases his view upon many quotations from the Talmud and Midrash which he interprets in his own way. There is no doubt that in the extensive Jewish literature support can be found for the emphasis upon the autonomy of ethics, and in fact, Saadia already said that we would have arrived at a number of laws, which he calls rational, through our own reason without the Torah (Vol. I, Sec. 166), but that this is the genuine Jewish view in its entirety is questionable. Our author's persistent effort to equate the Jewish principle of ethics with that of Kant has an apologetic ring, and in fact, he devotes a few pages to the refutation of Von Hartman's attack on theistic ethics in general and Jewish ethics in particular.⁸⁶

From the principle of Jewish ethics he turns to a definition of its character. Jewish ethics, says he, was always meant to include all humanity in its scope. Though originally its appeal was made to one nation, yet by its very essence it is universal. The very tendency of the Jewish spirit towards unity by positing one God necessitated a view of all-inclusive ethical unity. From the unity of God there follows the unity of nature and the unity of man. This is derived by him, as by Cohen and others, from the idea of creation. He quotes numerous Biblical and Rabbinic passages which he interprets in a manner suitable to his thesis and which is often forced. Thus he explains the verse "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and holy people" (Ex. XIX, 6) to mean that Israel as a nation shall bear itself towards the other nations as the priest toward laymen; it shall be teacher and spiritual leader. This interpretation which aims to derive from the verse the famous mission theory of Reformed Judaism not only deviates from the exposition of all leading commentators but contradicts the plain meaning of the verse as well as that of the preceding one.⁸⁷

However, Lazarus himself felt that he has gone a bit too far in his universalism and that there is much to be said against it; he therefore admits that there are in reality two tendencies in Judaism, a particularistic and a universalistic,⁸⁸ but decides that the latter is the more

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 117, 120, 123, 150, 151.

⁸⁷ In verse 5 it says "And ye shall be unto me a מְלִכָּה from all other nations." Now *Segulah* means according to the best lexicographers, property; the verse then means that Israel is the property of God. Consequently, verse 6 also means that Israel is to be God's property i.e. devoted to Him and not that they must serve other nations.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 212 ff.

genuine and constitutes the very kernel, while the former is the husk which grew through the exigencies of circumstances. He corroborates this view by statements from the Talmud and Midrash which he expounds very dexterously but often in a casuistic manner. Of the proofs cited for the universalism of Jewish ethics, the leading one is the oft-repeated command in the Bible, to love the stranger, an argument advanced almost by all apologists of Judaism and Lazarus is not the least of them. In fact, the apologetic tendency is in great evidence in the chapter.

The enunciation of the aim of Jewish morality is the next step in its systematic presentation. This our writer finds in its insistence on the sanctification of life which in turn implies a serious and profound view of it. In fact, sanctification of life is the aim of all morality, but nowhere was the notion of holiness invested with so much importance as in Judaism. There are, says Lazarus, several types of holiness: ritual holiness expressed in the performance of precepts and ceremonies of the cult as well as in the sacredness attached to the objects employed in these performances; religious holiness, that is the sanctification of the human spirit when it rises to communion with God; and finally, ethical holiness. The first is not important in itself except that it serves as a symbol for a higher world and as a step towards genuine religious holiness. As for the other two, while ethical holiness is independent of dogmatic conception, in Judaism, however, the two are intimately connected, for as we have seen, God is the archetype of morality and He is not conceived otherwise. It is through this moral conception that man can become "the image of God." What then is this ethical-religious holiness? This, says Lazarus, is the perfection of morality. Perfection, in its turn, demands first that it be unconditioned and practiced for its own sake; second, that it be whole and harmonious, namely that one is to follow all its injunctions, on the one hand, and not attach excessive importance to any one moral idea or phase, on the other hand. One-sidedness leads to the negation of moral values as manifested in the history of fanaticism and persecution. Furthermore, perfection also demands the union of all moral agents and that all efforts be directed towards the realization of morality in life, not only in that of the individual, but also in that of the community. We must know that man is never really holy. That attribute belongs to God; He alone is holy. Man can only aspire to holiness and become constantly sanctified. Holiness then is an uninterrupted striving to-

wards perfection of life along ethical lines, the gradual realization of which requires united effort. It also requires a plan in life and education for that purpose and the consideration of life as a vocation. By a vocation is meant "that the good in man shall be more than an impulse; it must be an enduring attribute, a constantly active force."³⁹ This cannot take place in man's conduct unless man himself in his soul and personality is good, and only then his acts may be truly good. Hence the Scriptures emphasize so much the goodness of the human heart. In the Bible the heart is conceived as the seat of the soul, and the word *Leb* (heart) is often employed for mind—and, therefore, when it is said in the *Shema* passage, recited by the Jews twice daily, "And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart (*Lebabka*), and with all thy soul (*Nafsheka*), and with all thy might (*Meodeka*), (Deut. VI, 5), we have to understand *Leb* as connoting the aggregate of convictions; *Nefesh* as the personality; and *Meod*, might, as the active will.

Another characteristic of moralization which is a feature of sanctification is lawfulness. This is realized by fulfillment of the laws and by willingness to act in accordance with the standard of the law. In Jewish ethics it is expressed by obedience to God and to His laws which are simultaneously moral laws. This relation between holiness and obedience to law is emphasized in the Torah numerous times. The disposition to fulfill the law must be considered the real aim of the law itself. No other results must be expected. An act becomes moral through obedience to the law that produced it. The thought was expressed by the Rabbis when they said, "The commands were given only to purify the creatures."⁴⁰ This obedience, however, must not be construed as a mere external legalism. On the contrary, feeling is not ignored; this obedience is to be carried out with emotion, and the Rabbis assert with emphasis, "The All-Merciful requires the heart."⁴¹—In the Talmud the term heart is closer to our notion of it as the seat of feeling.

The value of lawfulness becomes more evident when we consider its function as a means for the realization of holiness. Holiness is a high ideal difficult to attain. Lawfulness helps in that attainment, for by it life becomes permeated with the moral idea. Furthermore, the law

³⁹ Ibid., Vol. II, p. 38.

⁴⁰ *Gen. Rabba*, Ch. XLIV.

⁴¹ *Sanhedrin*, 106.

by its universality and applicability to all without exception produces a community bound by its dictates, and also serves as a force levelling the barriers between man and man set by nature, for all are equal before the law, and thus it imparts to human society a deeper and firmer spirit. The Rabbis, recognizing the value of lawfulness, have constantly insisted both upon the knowledge of the law and its fulfillment.

Lazarus devotes much space to the elucidation of the relation, expressed in Jewish ethics, between the moral law and nature in the broad sense, including corporeal life and its laws. Judaism, says he, does not, like other religions or moral systems, disparage nature. Neither nature nor matter is unholy, for both are the creations of God. Consequently, there is no conflict between morality and nature. On the other hand, nature can even become holy when viewed as the scene in which God's majesty and glory are revealed; moreover nature is the very place in which man's morality is manifested and he works in agreement with its laws. Yet we must remember that natural life with all its perfection is only transitory and fleeting, and that only the mind and the ethical aspirations can create the durable and the eternal. Consequently, from the Jewish ethical point of view the mind is to be placed at the service of the ideal and the moral. Man is to remember that he is to supplement the creation of the world by the creation of his own character. It is this idea which, according to our moralist, is embodied in the Talmudic statement, "Every human being is obliged to believe that the world was created for his sake."⁴² Nor does Judaism consider human nature in particular unholy or attribute to it elemental evil inclination. The term *Yezer* employed both in the Bible and the Talmud means instinct and man has both good and bad instincts, hence *Yezer Ra* and *Yezer Tob*. The law then comes to correct the natural instinct and guide it in the proper way. Nor do we find that Judaism disparages the body and preaches asceticism. There is no antagonism in it between body and spirit. There is a general tendency to prefer spirituality but no scorn for the corporeal. Even when fasting is praised at times in the Talmud, it is merely as a means to attain humility, for satiety produces arrogance. Similarly is Judaism averse to pessimism, for it inculcates joy in life and sanctions moderate pleasures and encourages cheerfulness. In general, Jewish ethics

⁴² *Sanhedrin*, p. 37a.

teaches the refining and elevating of the natural instincts and the inclinations of man and their union with the spiritual.

Since the aim of morality is the sanctification of life it implies that this aim cannot be attained except through a union of men. Not the individual can be holy but the community; God is the only holy individual. Judaism consistently emphasizes that idea. According to it, the moral rise of man is only in association and in harmony with the group. The community is the real bearer of the law, but the obligation rests upon each individual. Lazarus corroborates his view by numerous statements from the Bible and Talmud and points especially to the Messianic idea which he interprets in similar manner as Cohen and other representatives of liberal Judaism. The ultimate deduction is that Jewish ethics is social in its nature and teaches that the union of men must be of such a nature through which each individual may become more moral, but the goal is the elevation of the entire community.

The work, as a whole, is indeed a contribution to Jewish ethics, but the view presented displays a strained effort to show that Judaism is primarily ethical, and that its morality is in perfect agreement with the Kantian conception of ethics which to the author seemed to be the highest. The work itself suffers from much repetition as well as from a homiletic tendency.

123. ABRAHAM ISAAC KOOK

The religious thinkers hitherto considered were famous philosophers well versed in the general thought of the age who endeavored to integrate the views of Judaism within a wider philosophic scheme. The case is entirely different with the speculative efforts of Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935), the late chief Rabbi of Palestine. His views on God and His relation to the world and man, on the nature of man, on Israel, his selection and destiny, and ancillary subjects all bear the earmarks of deep thinking which has its source in traditional Jewish speculation tinged with mysticism and stamped with the quality of originality. They are, however, not expressed in a logical systematic order, but are contained in numerous statements scattered in his many pamphlets and articles of a semi-theological and speculative nature, and especially in his letters published in 1922 under the title *Igrot Rayah* (The Letters of Rayah, i.e. Rabbi Abraham Isaac ha-Kohen).

Piecing together the fragments of reflection contained in the many

statements and passages and disentangling them from homiletic or theological matter in which they are imbedded, we can obtain a more or less unified view of the fundamentals of the Rabbi's thought. First, as to God and His relation to the world. Kook who was steeped in the teachings of the Kabbala extracted from it the most fruitful kernels and utilized them in a masterly manner. The relation of God to the universe is, according to our thinker, not as that of an external creator to the object created by Him, but as that of an infinite force to its infinite manifestations. In other words, this force is constantly realizing itself in the infinite phenomena of nature and history, or as he expresses it in his mystical language: "The name of God is all-embracing; it is the center whence the light of which the phenomena are the reflections streams forth, and the bond of all forces in the universe, whether material, spiritual, moral, or social."⁴⁸ This revelation of God, however, is not patent to all; only the select conceive it. The inner light of God is richer and more multifarious in content than the external manifestation of divine power in the universe. As a result, there is a continual striving on the part of the select to come nearer to it, and similarly, the same striving is also the motive underlying the progress of humanity as a whole.

Kook not only believes in the progress of humanity but asserts that the divine power reveals itself primarily in humanity as a whole. Individuals and even groups may stray from the right path, but the human race is constantly rising and approaching the good which is elemental in the universe. Such a conception of God's relation to the world brings Kook to an optimistic view of life. He practically denies evil. What may seem to us evil in man is only a result of his weak efforts to attain the good. Absolute evil has no existence, for in every generation there are always a number of men who strive wholeheartedly toward the divine good in the world and they indirectly raise even the weaker members of the race to a higher level. Moreover, there is still another factor which contributes to human progress namely, the deeds and thoughts of the great men of the past. Our writer calls this factor by a well-known term in Jewish theology, the Merit of the Fathers (*Zekut Abot*), to which, however, he gives a new connotation. The good, says he, which these men of the past acquired during their lives does not disappear even after their death. Indirectly and by devious ways, this spiritual, moral, and intellectual good in-

⁴⁸ *Igorot*, p. 25.

fluences the lives of later generations and conduces to their elevation. These views served the Rabbi as a basis for his liberalism and tolerance which he displayed even towards men whose attitude to religion was negative.

These thoughts on God and the world, on the nature of man and his destiny are supplemented by reflections on the Jewish people and its role in history. The content of the life of the human race as a whole expresses itself, according to Kook, in two ways, in the ability to lead a social life and in its spirituality, namely in thought and belief. Concretely, he calls these expressions the ideas of nationalism and godliness. The first symbolizes all manifestations of a well-ordered social life, while the second includes all spiritual phenomena. A perfect unity of the two when the national life would be permeated with godliness, would constitute an ideal state of human society, but thus far, humanity has not attained that state. Due to decline in progress caused by various factors, there occurred a separation between the two which resulted in the rise of materialism at the expense of spirituality.

Israel, however, was selected by Providence as the bearer of the idea of godliness. In his national life the two ideas attained unity. His selection was for the sake of humanity, namely that he exert influence on other nations and help them to spiritual uplifting. This function, though, Israel could fulfill only when he lived in his land. Kook differs from many philosophers of Jewish history and thinks that the early period of the life of the people, namely that of the First Commonwealth, was of a high quality, notwithstanding the frequent strayings from the right path. The nation, as a whole, was then in full possession of spirituality. It was the aberrations of the individuals which ultimately caused the rupture between the two ideas and resulted in the downfall of the Commonwealth.

The period of the Second Commonwealth marked a rise in the state of spirituality of the individuals but not in that of the nation. True, knowledge of the Torah had increased and correspondingly the observance of the precepts, but these all affected the individuals but not the soul of the nation. Religion, in its organized form, took the place of the idea of godliness in its widest connotation.

In exile, there occurred again a rupture between the ideas of nationalism and godliness. They continued to exist, but not in unity, nor in their pristine form. Godliness was narrowed down to study, to rigorous observance of *Mitzvot* and to the synagogue, while the na-

tional idea realized itself primarily in the struggle for existence. Occasionally, the godliness of the Jews broke through its narrow confines and exerted influence upon various movements which had conduced to the rise of humanity, but such moments were rare in Jewish history in exile. The real perfection of Jewish life will be attained only when the people will be restored once more to the land.

Kook, therefore, saw in the national movement of our days an approach to the ideal era in the life of Israel. In his enthusiasm he believed that the coming era will possess the particular quality which the two periods, those of the First and the Second Commonwealths lacked, namely, an intensive spirituality in both the life of the group and in that of the individuals. In other words, he hoped for a real harmony between the two ideas, the national and that of godliness. He further hoped that since many ideas of Judaism already became a part of the culture of humanity, it will be easier for the Jews, once they return to their land, to exert spiritual influence upon other nations.⁴⁴

He entertained such rosy hopes about the national restoration, in spite of the indifference of the young generation to religion and the open irreligiosity of the *Haluzim* in Palestine with whom he came in contact. His hopes were in consonance with his optimism according to which he believed that in general there is religious progress and that the prevalent heresies arise only from misunderstanding of religious concepts, and that ultimately these will be cleared up. This optimism he fortified by a theological theory. There are, he says, two factors which conduce to the holiness of the Jewish people and their union with the divine power. One is their heritage, namely the inner spirituality with which Providence endowed the Jewish soul, a quality which never entirely disappears; the second is the good deeds of the individuals. There are times in Jewish history when one force attains ascendancy, and other times, when the other comes into its own. The national movement of our days he considered a moment dominated by the spirit of the heritage of the nation, and therefore one of redemption, in spite of the fact that the good deeds, i.e. religious conduct of the young are not in evidence. He was confident that ultimately the young generation will also return to religion, for their national consciousness and their love for their people will bring them near to the holiness inherent in the chosen nation.

⁴⁴ *Igrot*, pp. 75-95.

There is undoubtedly much which is fantastic and mystic in this type of reflection, but also much which is noble and exalting.

C. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

124. DAVID NEUMARK

The endeavor to expound the teachings and views of the leading Jewish philosophers during the ages which was begun in the preceding period (Vol. III, Sec. 99) was also continued during the one under discussion. Not only was there a number of monographs written devoted to the exposition of the thought of individual thinkers, but several attempts were made to present the entire process of Jewish thought from its earliest beginnings to the end of the Middle Ages or even to the end of the nineteenth century in its various unfoldings and manifestations. Of these attempts, the one undertaken by David Neumark (1866-1924) to write the history of Jewish philosophy of the Middle Ages in ten volumes is the most important. Unfortunately, the work, due to the early death of the author, was not completed and only two volumes and a small part of the third appeared. Of these there are two versions, an earlier one in German entitled *Die Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie des Mittelalters*, published in 1907, and a later, more improved one, in Hebrew, which carries the more embracing title, *Toldot ha-Pilisufiah be-Yisrael* (The History of Philosophy in Israel), published in 1921 and 1929—volume two appeared posthumously. Yet, notwithstanding that these volumes represent only one fifth of the planned history, their scope, their detailed treatment of some of the problems of Jewish philosophy, and their integration with the general current of thought of the times, such as the Greek and the Arabic, give the work of Neumark a leading place in the historical-philosophical literature of the period. In addition, the first volume which is the introduction to the entire history really presents, though in a succinct manner, quite a comprehensive survey of the entire process of Jewish thought from Biblical times to the end of the Middle Ages.

Neumark, however, was not only a historian of Jewish philosophy but an original religious thinker. His numerous essays written during a period of thirty years—mainly in Hebrew—not only elucidate problems and phases of thought of an ethical and religious character but really aim at a development of a view of the world and life which he sincerely believed to be the genuine expression of the Jewish spirit

in its various unfoldings through the ages as he conceived it. In fact, it is for this purpose that he undertook the writing of the history of Jewish philosophy. In the opening chapter he states explicitly that the aim of the study of Jewish philosophy in our days is not merely to understand the past but to extend the past into the present and endeavor to find a way of life for the future. He further states: "The ultimate function of philosophic thought in Israel in our own time is to present a systematic exposition of the principles of Judaism based on a modern philosophic view of life."⁴⁵ This function, though, was understood by Neumark to consist not merely in effecting a reconciliation between Judaism and a certain system of philosophy nor even in proving the existence of God according to philosophical proofs, but in expressing the inner relations of human life to the world and the Infinite. In fact, our philosopher denies the very possibility of proving the existence of God or that of an ultimate spiritual reality through logical proofs, for he says it is only by an inner observation of the entire physical reality that we can conceive it. This fundamental religious conception is then in reality an intuition and it certainly is as valid as logic, for as he expresses himself in one of his essays, religion is a special sense of the soul.⁴⁶

This sense, though common to all men and peoples, yet, according to Neumark, found its principle and clearest manifestation in the people of Israel. Its existence throughout history is to be considered a national one, but religion is the basis of Jewish nationalism. The central point in this religion of Israel is an ethical view of life. It started with an analytical introspection into the life of man, scrutinizing his actions, good and bad, and as a result, it posited the existence of a guide of action, one who orders the course of history in accordance with the principles of justice and righteousness, in brief—an ethical God. To this view, which was intensified by the activity of Moses and the prophets and fortified by a series of laws, was later added its logical complement—the cosmological phase, namely that this ethical God is also the creator of the world. In this unity of the ethical and the cosmic lies the strength of Judaism, for it enabled it to present to the world a spiritual edifice which could withstand all the storms and clash of opinions.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ *Hist. of Phil. in Israel*. Vol. I, p. 7.

⁴⁶ *ha-Shiloah* Vol. I, p. 376.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. XI, p. 375.

This view of the unity of spirit which enunciated clearly the undivided unity of spiritual phenomena of both the ethical and cosmic phases is, says our author, the moving force in the process of development of the Jewish genius through the ages. Judaism through its long history came in contact with other views and theories which exerted a powerful influence in the world of thought. In early times, it was the Babylonian view; later, the Persian; and still later; the Hellenistic, the most powerful of all. Out of this contact there resulted a long struggle between Judaism and the other views which encroached upon its fundamental view. This struggle, asserts Neumark, still continues today, for elements of Hellenism are contained in the systems of modern philosophy. Judaism has still to defend its principles of the unity of the spirit.

It must, however, be understood that this struggle of Judaism to maintain its view was not aimed at keeping Judaism completely isolated from the influence of other cultures and theories. Nay, on the contrary, it is the duty of a living religion not to rest satisfied with its truth, whether it emanates from tradition or intuition, but to select what is true in the current thoughts it comes in contact with and reject what is false. This, says Neumark, was done by the prophets of old and later by the Mediaeval Jewish philosophers, and, adds he, it is the duty of the present-day thinkers to do the same. Furthermore, it is this struggle, which includes also selection of new elements, which constituted the very essence of speculation in Israel throughout the generations.

From all that was said, the real purpose and point of view of Neumark's history of Jewish philosophy becomes clear. He undertook to give not a history of ideas held by certain philosophers but of thought as it revealed itself in Israel throughout his entire history, tracing the development of the manifestations of the Jewish spirit, their ramifications, actions and reactions in all ages. This wide scope he deemed necessary, for the ultimate purpose was, as stated, not only to understand the past but to find a way of life for the future. It is on the basis of this history that he planned to present a systematic view of the fundamentals of Judaism in their relation to a modern philosophic view of the world and life.

The point of view and purpose of the author also necessitated a change of method. The other complete or partial histories of philosophy treated the subject in chronological order. Such a method

would not do for our historian's purpose which was to elucidate the principal phases of Judaism. This can be accomplished only by adapting the problematic method which offers a complete view of a phase of thought from all sides.

Accordingly, the plan of Neumark's *History* embraced ten volumes which were supposed to deal with the principal problems in Jewish philosophy in the following order: The first volume, a general introduction; the second, devoted to the problem of matter and form; the third and fourth, to the attributes of God in the ancient and Mediaeval periods of Jewish history respectively; the fifth, to the proofs for the existence, unity, and incorporeality of God and His creation of the world; the sixth, to the principal philosophical problems in post-classical Jewish philosophy; the seventh, to the theory of knowledge and psychology; the eighth and the ninth, to prophecy and ethics respectively; and the final volume, to dogmatics.

As can be seen from the plan, more than half of this great *History* was supposed to be devoted to the problem of the Godhead and its relation to the world in all its ramifications. This is in accordance with the whole trend of Jewish Mediaeval philosophy in which this problem predominates and also with Neumark's own view that the religious attitude, namely the relation of man to the Infinite, is the very essence of Judaism. Another phase of his view is reflected in the placing of the volumes on ethics and dogmatics in immediate succession. Judaism to him is an ethical monotheism, hence the intimate relation between morality and the very fundamental beliefs or principles which the religion of Israel enunciates. The opening of the history proper with a volume on matter and form is due to the fact that this problem dealing with the essence of reality is ancillary to the problem of the Godhead, and furthermore, it serves as preliminary to the problem of attributes which clarifies the entire conception of God. In placing these problems before the proofs of the existence of God and creation, Neumark followed to a very large degree Maimonides who employed a similar method in his *Guide*.

Of this planned History, there were published in Hebrew, as noted, only the first two volumes and in German the first three. In addition there was published by the historian a separate volume in Hebrew on dogmatics, *Toldot ha-Ikḳarim be-Yisrael* (The History of Dogmas in Israel; first part in 1913, second part in 1919). This volume covers to a large extent the content of the tenth volume of the History, though

it omits the conclusion which should have contained a systematic presentation of the view of Judaism in its relation to modern thought and which was supposed to have been drawn from the History. Taking the Hebrew and the German versions together we can see that half of the planned History of Jewish Philosophy was completed.

It would be out of place in a work of this kind to even attempt to give a summary of the content of the History. We will, therefore, limit ourselves to a brief description of the first volume which, as said, contains a general survey of the entire Jewish philosophy, and of his book on Dogmatics. In this volume, after a survey of the function of Jewish philosophy, he delineates in a long chapter called *The Character and Sources of Philosophy in Israel*, the main tendencies in Jewish thought during the ages. The basis of this survey is the struggle of Judaism to maintain its pure conception of the unity of spirit against all mythological, dualistic, and pluralistic views of other religions and philosophies with which it came in contact. He begins with a survey of this struggle, in Biblical times, against the Babylonian mythological ideas which began to exert influence upon Judaism. Introducing the results of Biblical criticism of which he was a follower, he sees in the views of Jeremiah and Ezekiel two opposing conceptions, the former enunciating the pure monotheistic belief while the latter introduced into Judaism other elements, especially the theory of angels and the mystic idea of the *Merkabah*. This mystic idea was purified by the Jewish spirit from the mythological element and remained a part of Judaism. He then follows up the struggle through the Alexandrian and Talmudic periods when the contact with Greek philosophy brought many other ideas into Judaism, among them the theory of ideas which originated with Plato but assumed different forms. With the theory of ideas there is intimately connected the view of the eternal existence of primal matter which impairs the purity of monotheism. There are also other ideas, such as that of emanation, namely that the world was gradually evolved from God in a long series of emanations. This view found support in the *Merkabah* conception of Ezekiel. Against all these ideas and conceptions Judaism struggled, but parts of them always remained in a more or less purified form. These elements formed the mystic current in Judaism. He continues the history of that struggle by delineating at great length the tendencies of Mediaeval Jewish philosophers and explaining their principal efforts at a reconciliation between Greek philosophy and Jewish monotheism,

noting the elements they rejected and those they accepted from that philosophy. In this part the author deals also with the relation of Jewish to Arabic philosophy as well as with the originality of the Jewish philosophic contribution. He also devotes much space to the exposition of the theories of the Kabbala. He opposes the view of many Jewish scholars that the Kabbala is a foreign importation in Judaism, as he believes it to be an outflowing of the esoteric and mystic current in Judaism which ran side by side with the main flow of national thinking. Neumark attempts to corroborate his views by lengthy citations from sources. The volume closes with a brief chapter on the plan and order of arrangement of the History, the result of which was given by us above.

In the work on the history of the dogmas, Neumark gives a comprehensive statement of the development of the dogmas in Judaism from Biblical times to the end of the Mediaeval period. Not only does he assert, in opposition to Mendelssohn and his followers, that Judaism has dogmas but endeavors to show that the most important parts of the Pentateuch, such as the Book of the Covenant (Ex. XX-XXIII, 33), Deuteronomy, and the Priestly Code—in all these the author follows the results of Biblical criticism—clearly enunciate the leading dogmas. He also attempts to prove that the Mishnah likewise enunciates the dogmas, adding four more to those established in previous periods. Classifying the dogmas in historical order as well as according to their intrinsic value, he arranges them in two divisions as follows: The first contains the essential dogmas which are (1) the existence of God as a pure spirit; (2) prophecy; (3) free will; (4) reward and punishment; (5) the existence of angels. Of these the first four express the essence of Judaism to a greater degree than the last, and were insisted upon by all early sources, while the last entered into Judaism only after a struggle. All, however, belong to the early Biblical period which was completed with Ezra.

The second division he calls the historical dogmas which are: (1) resurrection; (2) the world to come, including reward and punishment after death; (3) the heavenly origin of the written Torah (Torah min ha-Shamayyim); (4) validity of the Oral Law; (5) redemption of Israel (The Messiah). Of these, resurrection was accepted early in Maccabean times and was included in the second benediction of the important prayer, *Shemoneh Esré*, which benediction hails from early times. The other four received validity during

the period extending from early Maccabean times to the redaction of the Mishnah. This latter work contains all ten, which can be considered as the final version of the dogmas in Judaism. In fact, our author asserts that dogmatization was concluded with the Mishnah and that Mediaeval Jewish philosophy contains only a literary discussion of the dogmas and added little.

The bulk of the work is devoted to a detailed discussion of the development of these dogmas, the definition of their character and import, the different interpretations given to them at various times, and the historical circumstances which brought about their enunciation and fixation. The part devoted to the place of dogmas in Mediaeval Jewish philosophy not only gives a historical survey of the views on the dogmas of the leading Jewish thinkers but also elucidates many problems in connection with the various classifications of dogmas of the individual philosophers. It is quite possible that in the classification of the dogmas Neumark meant to indicate his own view as to which of the dogmas shall be accepted in our own days. He most likely would have subscribed to the first four essential dogmas: existence of God as a pure spirit, free will, reward and punishment, and prophecy, interpreted as the intuitive power possessed by men in matters divine and spiritual.

Both of his works, the *Histories of dogma* and of *Jewish philosophy*, are undoubtedly important contributions to Jewish thought of modern times, though as all such comprehensive treatises they are not without defects. The gravest of these are his undue reliance on Biblical criticism and the numerous hypotheses advanced without foundation. The positive side, however, overbalances the negative.

125. *BERNFELD'S AND GUTTMANN'S HISTORIES OF JEWISH PHILOSOPHY*

i. Simon Bernfeld, the prolific Hebrew writer whose works in several fields of Jewish literature we had occasion to discuss, also wrote a history of Jewish philosophy in four parts, entitled *Da'at Elohim* (The Knowledge of God). He was more modest in his purpose and he did not aim, as Neumark did, to construct out of the historical study of the manifestation of Jewish thought during the ages a modern philosophy of Judaism. He placed before himself a simpler task, namely to give a comprehensive survey of religious philosophic thought in Judaism, and this task he carried out with a large degree of success.

He defines religious philosophy somewhat narrowly, namely, as the effort to reconcile the conceptions of religion with the principles of reason. Still he does not act according to this definition and includes a survey of the Biblical and Talmudic religious views, though the striving for reconciliation is, on the whole, absent in these pronouncements. On the other hand, the views and opinions of *Tannaim* and *Amoraim* of a speculative character, which were promulgated for the purpose of refuting the ideas and conceptions prevalent in Greek philosophy of the time, he passes over in silence. In general his treatment of Jewish thought during the Biblical and Talmudic periods with the exception of the speculation of the Alexandrian school, especially that of Philo, is comparatively brief.

The bulk of the book is devoted to the Mediaeval period, and in the survey of the development of Jewish thought from Saadia to Spinoza, he does full justice to its representatives and their views. The method is chronological, each philosopher is discussed by our historian in successive order, and his views and ideas on important problems of Jewish religious philosophy expounded and presented in systematic manner. Bernfeld's treatment is objective and he is primarily the expositor and not the critic. The arrangement of the material in the History is, therefore, logically proportionate which is especially evident in his presentation of the philosophy of Maimonides. To this leading Jewish philosopher he devotes a whole book or a part of his work in which he expounds his thought in a detailed manner and logical order. Opening the book with an introductory chapter in which he deals with the life and activities of Maimonides, the state of philosophy among the Arabs, the principal views of Avicenna and Averroes, as well as those of other philosophers who in one way or another influenced Moses ben Maimon, he expounds in the second chapter the views of the thinker on God and His attributes. The third chapter is devoted to Maimonides' philosophy of nature and psychology, and the fourth to his view on principal beliefs, such as miracles, divine providence, and freedom of the will. The fifth deals with Maimonides' ethics, theory of prophecy, purpose of the Torah, and the meaning of the precepts. The sixth which closes the survey discusses the allegoric interpretations of portions of the Bible. This part, on account of its comprehensive treatment of the views of Maimonides, belongs to the best portions of the work and can be considered as one of the few monographs on this distinguished scholar, which Hebrew literature possesses.

Other philosophers, however, did not fare as well at the hands of our historian, especially Bahya, Hasdai Crescas, and Joseph Ibn Zaddik. The ethical views of the first which constitutes his main contribution are disposed of in two pages. Nor are the views of the second, who is probably the most important Jewish philosopher after Maimonides, sufficiently expounded. Crescas' criticism of Maimonides' proofs for the existence of God which is also a critique of Aristotle, his own proof for that existence, his view of creation, and his rebellion against the excessive emphasis of rationalism in Jewish speculation—all these are passed over in silence. The third fared worst of all. He is disposed of by Bernfeld in a single page which certainly does not do justice to him.

Valuable features of this treatise are the inclusion of the Kabbala in the exposition and the carrying down of the survey to modern times. The teachings of the Kabbala are given considerable space, but only in their developed form. The origin and early stages of Jewish mysticism are entirely overlooked and the author even fails to see the relation of the later Kabbala to the *Book of Creation* (Vol. I, Sec. 182), an oversight which is hardly excusable for one who undertakes a complete survey of Jewish speculation. Of the two chapters devoted to modern Jewish philosophy one deals entirely with Mendelssohn, and we obtain a fair conception of the views of the man who for a time was excessively glorified in Hebrew literature and then unjustly attacked and accused of having been the father of the Reform movement and its authority for the anti-nationalist view. Bernfeld treats him objectively and justly defends him against the accusation that he denied Jewish nationality.

The last chapter, dealing with post-Mendelssohnian thought is, on the whole, a mere outline and deals more extensively only with Nahman Krochmal and Aḥad ha-'Am, though the last one should be excluded by the author's own definition of religious philosophy. Of the liberal thinkers only Steinheim and Samuel Hirsch (Vol. III, Secs. 96, 97) are briefly touched upon, while Formstecher and others who supplied the Reform movement its theological and speculative basis are left out.

However, the weakness of this History consists not so much in the omissions as in a number of contradictions and loose statements. The same faults which were noted by us in the other writings of this prolific scholar are also in evidence in this History which belongs to the better

class of his works. Within a space of three pages, the author changes his mind three times in his judgement about the influence of Greek thought on the Book of Ecclesiastes (Kohelet). Quite carelessly does he antedate Neo-Platonism and makes it precede Philo. Nor are some of his statements about philosophic views or attitudes quite correct and several are distinctly erroneous, such as the one in which he asserts that the Spanish Kabbalists were largely enemies of traditional Judaism in its practical aspect (p. 350). He repeats the same assertion again without offering any proof. It is true that here and there a few expressions are found in the *Zohar* which speak of the study of the Talmud as inferior to that of the Kabbala and there are also several deviations in matters of law from the Talmud. But neither the first nor the second prove any general opposition to tradition on the part of the Kabbalists, let alone animosity to tradition. The expressions are neither derogatory nor authoritative, for by the very nature of that book (Vol. II, Sec. 113), no authority can be imputed to any of its expressions. The deviations incline towards severity in practice and not toward leniency and are in general insignificant. Besides, Spanish Kabbala had already reached its height when the *Zohar* was revealed. It is, therefore, groundless to make such a sweeping statement that the Kabbalists of that country were enemies of traditional Judaism.

The value of the history, though, is not greatly impaired by these faults, for on the whole, it offers a fair and comprehensive survey of the greater part of Jewish philosophy.

ii. Another history of Jewish philosophy which surveys the development of Jewish thought from early to modern times in a comprehensive but highly concentrated manner is *Die Philosophie des Judentums*, by Julius Guttmann (1880). Guttmann who made Mediaeval Jewish philosophy his special field of study was well equipped for the task and his account of the historical process of speculation among the Jews is not only philosophically sound and correct, but often elucidating. His definition of Jewish philosophy is very similar to that of Bernfeld. Like the former, he believes that the term does not apply to any speculation which arose in Israel during the Biblical and Talmudic times. Jewish philosophy arose in the Diaspora when Judaism met other systems of thought, especially Greek philosophy, and placed its truths in opposition to that of the latter. It is therefore a philosophy of religion in which the main motive is the reconciliation of the truth of revelation with that of reason. In Mediaeval times this was the lead-

ing tendency; in modern times the effort of Jewish thinkers was concentrated on determining the relation between religion and philosophy and defining the proper place and value of the former. Defining Jewish philosophy as such, our author explains that he includes a statement of Biblical and Talmudic thought only as an introduction to the main theme, the development of speculation in later times, and that he emphasizes only such features which contribute to the understanding of the main currents in Jewish Mediaeval philosophy. His treatment of the Talmudic and Biblical periods is consequently brief, but in spite of brevity, he hardly omits a distinguishing characteristic of the speculation of these periods. Influenced by the trend of contemporaneous Jewish thought, such as that of Cohen, Lazarus, Neumark, and others, Guttman stresses the ethical character of the Biblical God-idea and emphasizes the will of God as the leading trait in His relation to the world and man, on the one hand, and the importance of the will of man and immediacy in his relation to God, on the other hand. From such relation of the two based primarily on the will, it follows that both magic and mythology played hardly any role in early Judaism and that it persistently struggled against both. Of the other features of Biblical thought, the author deals more extensively with the revelation of God in history, the selection of Israel, and the Messianic idea.

Of the religious thought during the Talmudic period he singles out the importance placed on the study and observance of the law, the emphasis on the imitation of God, and the sober attitude towards this world, in spite of the current of other-worldliness which was in great evidence in the Jewish religion of the period. He touches but slightly on the mystical trends of speculation known as the *Ma'asé Merkabah* and *Ma'asé Bereshit* which he believes to have entered Judaism under the influence of the theories of the Gnostics. Unlike Neumark who devotes much space to these subjects, he considers them of little significance in the formation of the character of the Talmudic religious thought. He is also quite brief in his survey of the Hellenistic thought and devotes himself primarily to Philo whose ideas he expounds in comparative detail.

His main task is the post-Talmudic Jewish philosophy the exposition of which occupies the larger part of his work. His general method in that exposition is according to schools, namely he groups the Jewish philosophers of the long Mediaeval period into schools by selecting a

common distinguishing characteristic of their thought. This characteristic is their attitude toward the currents of the general thought of their times. Accordingly, he finds the following schools in the whole Jewish philosophy: that of the Kalam, the neo-Platonic, and the Aristotelian. To the first group belong Saadia, the Karaite philosophers, Joseph Al-Basir and Joshua ben Yehudah (Vol. I, Sec. 185), and a number of minor thinkers, both Rabbanites and Karaites. Their principal trait is that they followed in their methods the religious philosophers known as the Mutakallimun who adopted much of Greek philosophy but were also critical toward some of the leading doctrines. In the second group he includes Isaac Israeli, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Bahya and Judah ha-Levi, besides minor philosophers like Abraham Ibn Ezra and others. To the third group belong Abraham Ibn Daud, Maimonides, Gersonides, and Hasdai Crescas. The division is not always an exact one, and the inclusion, for instance, of Bahya in the neo-Platonic group is to a degree a forced one, but it is the scheme adopted by most of the later students of Jewish philosophy and Guttman followed it. In accordance with this division he expounds the views and theories of each philosopher in a systematic manner. His method of exposition of the thought of each individual thinker is the problematic one, as he endeavors to arrange it according to the main problems dealt with by the philosopher and he endeavors to find the logical connection between them. Thus, he distinguishes in Saadia's work two fundamental problems, that of the God-idea and that of His justice. These embrace his entire system, for the first is subdivided into the problems of existence of God, His attributes, and creation, and the second into those of freedom and reward and punishment which involve the purpose of the Torah, immortality, the hereafter, and the coming of the Messiah, besides several ancillary questions. A similar effort at concatenation of problems are employed by him in the exposition of Maimonides' thought as well as in those of other thinkers.

Of great value are his introductions to the various sections of the work in which he surveys briefly the mutual relations between the views of the Jewish thinkers and the principal conceptions of the general philosophy of the time. Of these the one which deals with the rise of Jewish philosophy within the Islamic cultural sphere is of special importance. In it our historian stresses for the first time the fact that the prevalence of scepticism as well as the spread of many heretical ideas among the Jews of Babylon in later Gaonic times were

among the causes which brought about the rise of Jewish philosophy. Besides Hivi Al-Balkhi (Vol. I, Sec. 106) whose severe criticism of the Bible Saadia refuted in a special treatise, the historian points out others to whom Saadia refers in his philosophical treatise who believed in the eternal existence of primal matter, or considered one of the elements, fire or water, as the substance out of which the world was created, or held other theories which oppose Jewish beliefs in one way or another.

In his exposition of Jewish philosophy in modern times, attention is primarily centered on religious philosophers, such as Mendelssohn, the exponents of Reform Judaism, Formstecher and S. Hirsch, the conservative Steinheim, and the later representatives of Jewish thought, H. Cohen and M. Lazarus. No account is taken of the national current of Jewish thought. However, with this exception, the survey is complete, for no philosopher is left out. Even Spinoza is taken into account, though the historian is quite aware that his thought hardly belongs to Jewish philosophy. He therefore devotes a comparatively long chapter merely to the influence of Jewish philosophy on the system of Spinoza. However, it must be admitted that it hardly fulfills its purpose. It does not point out the distinct influence which individual philosophers, such as Maimonides or Crescas, or Gersonides exerted upon Spinoza, and that there is such influence was proved by a number of scholars,⁴⁸ but it deals mainly with the relation of Spinoza to Jewish Aristotelianism, but the distinctly Jewish coloring of this phase of thought is not stressed in the chapter. Another weak feature of this history is a general lack of clarity. The exposition, due to its brevity and highly concentrated character, is marked by abstractedness and complexity. Not only are few illustrations given, but even the passing from the discussion of one set of problems to another is frequently abrupt without proper transition. Such shortcomings, though, do not affect the value of the history as a whole.

126. MONOGRAPHS

The interest in the study of Jewish philosophy was not limited to the writing of complete histories only but expressed itself in numerous monographs which presented the views of a single philosopher, or even a leading aspect of his thought, as well as in treatises on certain phases of Jewish philosophy in general. Of the many monographs there are to

⁴⁸ On this point see M. Joel, *Zur Genesis der Lehre Spinozas* Breslau, 1871. M. Waxman, *The Philosophy of Hasdai Crescas*, N. Y. 1920, Chas. II, V, VI, VII, and H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, Cambridge, 1934.

be noted: D. Kaufman's *Studien über Solomon Ibn Gabirol*; Dryer's *Die religiöse Gedankenwelt des Solomon Ibn Gabirol*; J. Hertz's *Bahya, the Jewish Thomas à Kempis*; Max Doctor's *Die Philosophie des Ibn Zaddik*; D. Neumark's *Judah ha-Levi's Philosophy in its Principles*; and G. Orshansky's *Abraham Ibn Ezra als Philosoph*.

i. All these, as can be seen, deal with pre-Maimonidian philosophers. Maimonides however, continued to form a center in Jewish philosophic study, and the number of monographs and essays dealing with his philosophy or certain of its aspects is considerable. Those of interest are G. Levy's *Maimonide*, a volume devoted to the exposition of his philosophy and published in the series *Les Grands Philosophes*; J. N. Münz's *Maimonides' philosophisches Hauptwerk More Nebuchim*, forming the fifth chapter in his book; *Moses ben Maimon, sein Leben und seine Werke*; Ph. Bloch's, *Charakteristik und Inhaltsangabe des More Nebuchim*; Hermann Cohen's *Charakteristik der Ethik Maimunis*; and J. Guttmann's *Der Einfluss der maimonidischen Philosophie auf das christliche Abendland*. The last three essays were published in the two volume work issued in 1908 and 1914 respectively in commemoration of the septocentennary of Maimonides' death. Of special value is Cohen's essay in which he reveals to us for the first time the important role ethics plays in the system of Maimonides and rejects the prevalent view of his extreme rationalism according to which contemplation is the real goal of human life and morality only a step towards it. Guttmann's essays are likewise of great interest as he shows in a detailed manner by numerous quotations from the works of the leading scholastics the influence this great philosopher exerted upon the Christian thought of Mediaeval Europe. Maimonides' influence upon Spinoza in the formation of some of his theories was dealt with by Leon Roth in his book, *Descartes, Spinoza, and Maimonides*. Of the monographs dealing with the post-Maimonidian philosophers there are to be mentioned: J. Wolfsohn's *Der Einfluss Gazalis auf Chasdai Crescas*; and A. Tänzer's *Die Religionsphilosophie Joseph Albos*.

ii. Of the second type of philosophical studies, the noted treatises are: M. Schreiner's *Der Kalam in der jüdischen literatur*, and S. Horowitz's *Die Psychologie bei den jüdischen Religions-Philosophen des Mittelalters von Saadia bis Maimuni*. The first deals primarily with the influence the Kalam, the earlier Arabic religious philosophy, exerted upon a number of Jewish philosophers, and also discusses the opposition of other Jewish thinkers to its teachings, especially Maimonides.

Schreiner traces that influence through the works of Saadia, Bahya, Ibn Zaddik, Abraham Ibn Ezra, and the Karaite philosophers, Joseph Al-Basir, Aaron ben Joseph, and Aaron ben Elijah. Of these it is primarily Saadia and the Karaite thinkers who followed the teachings of the Kalam to a great extent; the others show but slight influence and even that they received indirectly, mainly through the medium of Saadia. Maimonides, on the other hand, as is well known, devoted several long chapters in his *Guide* (Chas. LXXII-LXXXVI) to the refutation of the doctrines of the Mutakallimun. To this refutation the author devotes much space discussing the Arabic sources whence Maimonides drew his knowledge of the theories he opposes, and expounding both the teachings of the Kalam and the arguments of the Jewish philosophers.

The essay as a whole throws light upon the thought of a number of Jewish philosophers, such as Saadia and the others of this trend and helps us to understand many passages in their works as well as in the *Guide* of Maimonides. There is to be noted also that Schreiner calls attention to the fact that not only did the Kalam influence Jewish thought, but vice versa, Judaism also influenced the Kalam, in fact, it was a factor in its birth and origin. He quotes a number of statements by early Arabic writers who speak of the influence of Jews and Judaism upon the formation of the Mutazilite doctrines of freedom of the will and the purity of the God-idea.

The second monograph consisting of four essays is of great value for the history of Jewish philosophy for it deals with an important phase of its thought and the theories of the soul as reflected in the speculation of four leading thinkers, namely Saadia, Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Joseph Ibn Zaddik, and Abraham Ibn Daud. It is quite true, says the author in the preface, that Jewish philosophers in the Middle Ages did not develop their own system of psychology, for they, like all the other philosophers of that period, worked in that field with ready material supplied mainly by Greek philosophy. Yet, they elaborated and perfected some of its phases and gave them a different direction in their application to specific problems with which they were especially concerned. Moreover, a study of the psychological theories of Jewish thinkers is of great help in understanding their system as a whole. These philosophers usually dealt with psychology in connection with the teaching of immortality of the soul, or in connection with ethics, or with the problem of the freedom of the will, and others even with

the proper conception of God, for they agreed that a material conception of the soul evolves also a similar impure conception of God. All these problems form the very backbone of Mediaeval Jewish thinking, and it is evident that a survey of the psychological theory of Jewish speculation is of help for its general understanding. Horowitz treats his subject in great detail and gives a complete statement of the psychological views of the philosophers mentioned above. The choice was made with definite purpose, for they represent the three schools of Jewish thought, namely Saadia representing that of the Kalam, Gabirol and Ibn Zaddik, and the neo-Platonic, and Ibn Daud the Aristotelian. In addition, he also gives by way of introduction to each essay a succinct but quite comprehensive characteristic of the entire philosophy of the man it deals with. Furthermore, the author, in order to prove the correctness of the views he presents on certain moot points in psychological theory, offers in numerous long notes explanations of difficult passages in the works of Saadia, Gabirol, and those of the other two philosophers, or suggests emendation in their texts. These qualities greatly enhance the value of the work, and make it a distinct contribution to the study of the development of Jewish thought.

During the last two decades younger scholars turned their attention from the study of Mediaeval Jewish philosophy to that of the expression of Jewish thought in modern times, and as a result we have a number of works dealing with the latest phase of Jewish speculation. Of such works there are to be mentioned *Das Judentum und die geistige Strömungen der Neuzeit* (Judaism and the Spiritual Currents in Modern Times) by Albert Lewkowitz; *Jüdische Religion in Zeitalter der Emanzipation* (Judaism in the Age of Emancipation) by Max Wiener; *Geschichte der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie in der Neuzeit* (History of Jewish Religious Philosophy in Modern Times) by Hans Joachim Schoepps; *Hogé ha-Dor* (Philosophers of the Generation) by Hugo Bergmann; and *Shitat Habad* (The System of Habad), the philosophical current of Hāssidism (Vol. III, Sec. 8).

iii. The first is an attempt to trace the points of contact, agreement, and contrast between the views of Judaism and those of the leading thinkers in modern times. It is divided into three parts, the first of which deals with the philosophy of the Renaissance, the second with that of the Enlightenment, and the third with the philosophy of the nineteenth century. The method employed by the author is the presentation of the views of the principal European philosophers especially

on religious problems, from Giordano Bruno to Bergson and pointing out at the end of the survey how far their views agree with those of Judaism or contradict its principles. In addition, he includes also surveys of the philosophies of Jewish thinkers, such as Mendelssohn and others. Of special importance is the third part, which is imposing in quantity and distinguished in quality. In it the author undertakes to give a survey of all the intellectual and spiritual currents in European thought during the nineteenth century, in their various meanderings, tendencies and phases, and attempts to indicate its direct and indirect effects upon movements within Jewry as well as the efforts made by Jewish scholars to adjust Judaism to the spirit of European culture. He recognizes, on the whole, three main streams of thought which are divided into various currents, that of ethical-rationalism founded by Kant; the romantic, which prevailed during the first half of the last century, in which the pantheistic note of viewing God as manifested in nature and human life played such an important role; and the naturalistic of the second half of that century, which includes several currents, such as the positivistic, the materialistic, and the irrational. He treats each of these spiritual and intellectual divisions in connection with the influence they exerted upon Judaism and Jewish thinkers. He points out that there was a reconciliation effected between the first two and the views of Judaism which brought about some definite positive results. Kantian rationalism called forth efforts on behalf of his followers, such as Maimon, Lazarus, and Cohen, to emphasize the ethical-religious content of Judaism. The pantheistic and historical tendencies of the Romantic school of thought with their emphasis upon the amalgamation of the concept of humanity with that of nationalism, were instrumental in the development of "Jewish Science" which endeavored to unfold the historical content of Judaism in both its national and universal aspects. Again, this tendency, strengthened by the national movements among the European nations, was conducive to the birth of political nationalism in Jewry.

The naturalistic view of the world and life in all its manifestations can, on the whole, not be reconciled with Judaism but a number of thinkers of Jewish origin, such as Bergson, Simmel, and Husserl, made strenuous efforts to combat its principal views and develop a more spiritual philosophy. In all these contacts between Judaism and the totality of European culture during a glorious century, the author sees not only the influence of the latter upon the former but also vice versa, and

he therefore comes to the conclusion that there is a need for further efforts to make the eternal verities of Judaism a factor in the further intellectual progress of humanity.

It must be admitted, though, that the work in spite of the title lays more emphasis on the presentation of the views of the general philosophers than on the particular relation of Judaism to these doctrines, which relation is not sufficiently delineated. However this stricture applies more to the first two parts rather than to the third. Still, such method seems to agree with the purpose the author had in mind, that is to prepare the ground for a synthesis between Judaism and the spirit of European culture. From this point of view, the work of Lewkowitz which surveys briefly the views of the important European thinkers and emphasizes their bearing upon Judaism, and in addition, presents also the views of modern Jewish religious philosophers, contributes to a deeper understanding of the process of adjustment of Judaism to the modern spiritual and intellectual environment.

iv. Wiener's and Schoepps' works cover to a degree the same field of thought, but the former is more comprehensive in its scope. It presents a clear and lucid survey of the process of adjustment of Judaism to the thought of the age as reflected in the writings of representatives of Jewish speculation and scholarship from Mendelssohn to Graetz. No current or tendency in Judaism during that period is omitted; the views of the leaders of the Reform movement, those of conservatism, and of neo-Orthodoxy are all presented and evaluated.

v. Schoepps' work is more circumscribed in its scope, inasmuch as it stops with the middle of the nineteenth century and restricts itself to a limited number of men whom he singles out as religious philosophers. These are primarily Moses Mendelssohn, Solomon Formstecher, Samuel Hirsch, and Solomon Ludwig Steinheim. To the first three he devotes the first part of his work and to the last the second. The historian, in fact, denies to the entire Mediaeval Jewish thought the claim to be called a religious philosophy proper inasmuch as its main problem was the reconciliation between traditional Judaism and the philosophy of the age and did not touch upon the question of determining the content of religion from the philosophical point of view. The first real Jewish philosopher, according to him, was Moses Mendelssohn who represents in his thought the philosophy of the Enlightenment, and the others were Formstecher, Steinheim, and Hirsch who reflect in their religious thought the views of Schelling,

Kant, and Hegel respectively. In each of these, the fundamental notions of religion are described and determined primarily from deductions of reason and not from that of traditional revelation. In fact, the notion of revelation itself is transformed in their systems and given a rational basis. From this standpoint he surveys the philosophies of the selected thinkers in comparative detail, especially, that of Steinheim. As such, the work of Schoepps is of importance for the history of modern Jewish thought. He is not, however, always clear in his presentation, nor even always correct in his terminology.

vi. Bergman's book consists of a collection of essays on certain aspects of the philosophies of a number of thinkers both non-Jewish and Jewish. In the introduction he explains that his purpose in these essays is to find a solution for the problem which philosophy and science grapple with, namely the total agreement between the human conception of the world and the world in itself. The problem which really originated with Kant was a central subject of thought throughout the nineteenth century and various solutions were offered to it, some idealistic and some realistic. It was aggravated at the beginning of the present century with the development of science which deals primarily with the material world. He claims that H. Cohen's last work, *The Religion of Reason*, presents a solution to this problem, inasmuch as he posits both the creation of the world and that of human reason by God. The agreement between the conception of the human reason of the world and the world in itself is thus guaranteed, for both have one source.

It is the presentation of the problem itself and the various solutions offered by recent philosophers which form the uniting feature of the different essays. Among the essays which deal with phases of Jewish thought are the following: *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*; *Franz Rosenzweig and his Work*, *The Star of Redemption*; and, *The Last Work of Hermann Cohen*. These essays are brief and touch only on certain aspects in the thought of these men. In regard to Buber, it seems, though, that Bergman derived from his works more philosophy than is really contained there. His essay on Cohen, in spite of his claim in the introduction to have found in his last work the solution to the grave problem mentioned above, does not give a clear conception of that solution. However, as a survey of Cohen's views on religion it is elucidating and conduces to their understanding.

vii. Teitelbaum's volume on the *Habad* forms a part of his larger

biography of the founder of the current in Ḥassidism, Sheneor Zalman of Ladi (Vol. III, Sec. 8), and presents in a systematic way the views of the religious thinkers of the Ḥabad stamp. This tendency in Ḥassidism, as it was pointed out by us in the preceding volume, is distinguished by its positive attitude towards reason and its emphasis upon the blending of thought and learning with piety, and hence its name *Ḥabad*, initials of *Ḥokmah, Binah, Da'at*. Sheneor Zalman was a thinker and though he knew little of philosophy in the technical sense of the word, yet his religious speculation which he expressed in several works, the principal of which is the *Tanya*, contains many thoughts of a real philosophic ring.

Teitelbaum collected these thoughts, disentagled them from the extraneous matter in which they are imbedded, divested them from the mystical language in which they are expressed, and arranged them in a connected manner in accordance with the subjects they deal with. We have thus a detailed survey of the views of Sheneor Zalman on such important religious views as creation, the relation of God to the world, the soul and its activities, fear and love of God, Torah, prayer, joy of life, and charity. The first three are given much attention by the author and he endeavors to present the central conception of the views in as clear a manner as possible. In regard to creation, it is the difficult theory of the mystics followed by Sheneor Zalman, known as the limitation of the divine light (*Zimzum*) which is expounded. In order to single out his distinct contribution to the understanding of this concept the author surveys briefly the views on this subject by previous Kabbalists, and then explains the view of Sheneor Zalman. Special effort is made by the writer to clear the Ḥassidic teacher from the charge of pantheism of which he was accused by opponents in his time, and which was attributed to him by several modern scholars on the basis of expressions in his works. Teitelbaum enumerates the essential differences between the views of Sheneor Zalman in regard to the relation of God to the world and those of Spinoza. Sheneor Zalman knew little of psychology, yet he had a fine intuitive conception of the activity of the soul in its important phases, as expressed in human conduct, in life. These views are well presented by the author in two chapters, one on the faculties of the soul, and the other, on its inclination to virtue and vice.* The book, on the whole, contributes

* For a statement of the principal views of Sheneor Zalman, see Vol. III, Sec. 8. For the Kabbalistic conception of *Zimzum*, see Vol. II, pp. 364, 375.

much towards a better comprehension of an important current in the religious thought of modern times.

127. EDITIONS, TRANSLATIONS, AND COMMENTARIES

The scholars of the period under discussion who distinguished themselves by the discovery of the Cairo *Genizah* and by editing and publishing many valuable books which were hidden in manuscripts in various libraries, did not neglect the field of Jewish philosophy. Numerous important works in that branch which were written either in Arabic, or in Hebrew, or the translations of works from the former into the latter language made in Mediaeval times, were scientifically edited and published for the first time by various scholars. Some of these editions are accompanied by translations into a European language.

i. The most important of these works in the order of their publication are the following: The original Arabic text of Saadia's *Emunot we-Deot* was edited and published by Landauer (1880), bearing the title *Kitab Al-Amanat wa-wa'l I'tiqadat*. The Arabic text of Judah ha-Levi's *Kuzari* was edited and published with an English translation and accompanied by a corrected version of Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation by Hirschfeld (1887). The Arabic text of Saadia's other philosophical work, his commentary on the *Sefer Yezirah*, which was known hitherto only in the Hebrew translation found in manuscript was edited and published for the first time by M. Lambert (1891) and accompanied by a French translation with notes and introduction. The Hebrew translation of a treatise on the soul entitled *Torot ha-Nefesh* (Doctrines of the Soul) as well as the Arabic original of the book were edited and published by Isaac Broyde and Ignaz Goldziher respectively (1895, 1907). The title pages of the manuscript ascribe the book to Bahya, but when scholars studied the content of the treatises they became convinced on numerous grounds that this work could not have been written by the author of *The Duties of the Heart*, as the views of the former work do not agree with those expressed in the latter, and they, therefore, refer to the *Torot ha-Nefesh* as the pseudo-Bahya work. The Arabic original of the real philosophic work of Bahya, *The Duties of the Heart*, was edited and published for the first time by A. S. Yahuda (1912) with an elucidating introduction.

Finally, the important philosophical work of Solomon Ibn Gabirol, *Mekor Hayyim* (Vol. I, Sec. 67), which was known only in the Latin

translation made in the twelfth century—the Arabic original was lost—was translated into Hebrew by J. Blowstein under the editorship of A. Ziproni and prefixed with a lengthy introduction by Joseph Klausner (1926). The translation was made from the Latin, but at the end of the book there is appended a Hebrew epitome of the work made by Shem Tob Ibn Falaquera in the thirteenth century, and first published by Munk in 1857 (Vol. III, Sec. 99). The introduction is a fair-sized monograph on Gabirol, the man, the poet, and the philosopher. Klausner treats at great length his life, his poetic genius as reflected in his poems, and in a more succinct manner his philosophy, though we might have expected the reverse in view of the fact that the essay is supposed to introduce a philosophic work. With his usual endeavor to point out the distinctive Jewish quality in every Jewish writer, no matter how far he strayed from the beaten path of Judaism, Klausner calls Gabirol's philosophy a Jewish pantheism, though he hardly proves the correctness of either term as far as they apply to the system of this thinker. It is very questionable whether Gabirol's philosophy can be construed as pantheism, nor is it certain that his principal conceptions were derived from Jewish sources. However, his essay on the whole is of merit and contributes to the understanding of Gabirol in all three phases enumerated by the writer.

Of the works of Maimonides there are to be noted recent editions of the Hebrew translations of the earliest and the latest of his philosophical works, namely that of the *Milot ha-Higayon* (Logical Terms) by L. Roth and the *More Nebukim* by Judah Kaufman, of which the first part has thus far appeared.

ii. The first was printed many times without and with commentaries the best of which is the one by Moses Mendelssohn. Yet, in spite of all these editions, there was a need for one more prepared in a scientific and critical manner, and Roth undertook to supply this need and fulfilled his task successfully. The text is based on Ibn Tibbon's translation published at Venice in 1550 which is usually called the *editio princeps*, but as there is in reality an earlier edition, one published in Basel, in 1526, by Sebastian Münster with a Latin translation, and also another Hebrew translation by Ahtub, and in addition, there are also extant parts of the Arabic text, the editor took all these things in consideration and followed the better readings. The various changes of the versions are given on each page. He thus succeeded in producing an improved text. However, of still greater value are his explana-

tory notes and translation of the terms into Latin, German, and English which form a running commentary and make the work an open book to all types of students.

iii. The second is more than an improved edition of the text of a well known book, for it contains also a commentary and several introductions to the various sections of the *Guide*, each of which deals extensively with a phase of the philosophy of Maimonides. In each of these divisions of Kaufman's work, there is much labor invested, and wide learning and keen reasoning displayed. The improvements introduced by Kaufman in his editions of the text of Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation of the *Guide* are of great importance. The text, though printed numerous times, was never edited scientifically and critically, while the edition of the original Arabic text (Vol. III, Sec. 99) by Solomon Munk is a model work. As a result, the Hebrew contained numerous errors. Besides, Ibn Tibbon was not always uniform in his translation of certain terms and expressions nor did he observe all the grammatical rules. The earlier printed editions of the *More Nebukim* did not contain references to the many Biblical quotations nor were the proper punctuation marks used. The editor set for himself the task to remove all these deficiencies. On the basis of the *editio princeps* (1480) of the Hebrew text of the *Guide* together with the emendations suggested by Munk and other scholars who translated the work into European languages and by a careful comparison with the Arabic original, the editor weeded out all the errors of the text. He further improved Ibn Tibbon's version by making it more uniform both in expression and grammatical usage. As a result, the Kaufman text is a more correct rendering of the Arabic original. To facilitate the understanding of the content he introduced punctuation marks. And what is of greater importance, he vocalized the entire text. The editor supplied his edition with four introductions, a general one and one for each of the three sections into which the first part of the *Guide* is subdivided, namely the first forty-nine chapters dealing with anthropomorphic expressions in the Bible, chapters fifty to seventy-two containing the theory of attributes and kindred subjects, and the last four chapters (LXXIII-LXXVI) devoted to the exposition of the theories of the Kalam. The general introduction deals with the life of Maimonides including a description of the intellectual environment in which he grew up, his other works, and with the purpose of the *Guide*. Kaufman introduces a wider conception of that purpose than

what can be learned from Maimonides' own introductory epistle. He sees that purpose as a threefold one, namely to emancipate man from the three limitations which distort his views of God, life, and the world. The first is that of language which prevents man not only from the proper expression of his conception of God but from the right understanding itself; the second is that of human experience; and the third is the homocentric view which makes man the center and the goal of the universe. At each of these emancipations a part of the *Guide* is aimed; the first deals with explanations of anthropomorphisms and the attributes of God; the second part establishes the proper conception of God as the active cause of the world, a conception which is not given in experience; and the third part posits God as the final cause of the world, mainly as one who communicates with man and as the goal toward which man should strive. It cannot be denied that it is a fine attempt to find complete unity in the philosophical-theological problems as presented in the *Guide* according to the method of Maimonides and according to the Aristotelian scheme of causes. It has, however, grave faults, one of which we shall point out. A final cause is the aim for which the thing was created or made. As such, the third part of the *Guide* which deals with numerous questions, as God's providence, freedom of the will, immortality, and the purpose of the Torah cannot be said to have been aimed at the enunciation of the concept of God as the final cause of the world and man. Only the last few chapters speak of man's purpose in life, which is to strive to understand God. However even these chapters can only be forcibly interpreted as enunciating the view that God is the final cause of the world. Furthermore if God is the final cause then one can conclude that the world and man were created for his sake, which is absurd. The truth is that the third part deals with a group of problems which can be subsumed under a generic name, God's relation to man and to the world.

In general, there can be noted in Kaufman's introductions an excessive tendency to emphasize the complete unity of his method and to draw out the hidden meaning, which he, like several of his predecessors, believes to be embodied in the chapters of the *Guide*. These efforts often cause him to read into some of the chapters thoughts which one can hardly find in them no matter how deeply he should penetrate into the meaning of the words. This tendency is especially evident in his introduction to the first forty-nine chapters. These

chapters have presented great difficulties to commentators, for the connection between them is loose. Kaufman undertakes to supply the wanted unity by a very ingenious classification of groups of ideas which, according to him, Maimonides intended to expound in these chapters, but he draws them out of the chapters in a most mysterious way, basing them on slender foundations, often on a single word. Still there is much understanding of the views of Maimonides in this analysis and exposition of the content of this section of the *Guide*.

Valuable and elucidating are the introductions to the last two sections of the book, that on the attributes and on the Kalam. In the first, Kaufman displays a mastery of this most difficult subject treated by Maimonides, and in the second a historical survey of the development of the various views of the early Islamic philosophers known as the Mutakallimun is given which is of great help in understanding the exposition of these theories given in the *Guide*.

The views propounded in the introduction are reflected in the commentary, which, on the whole, evinces a keen sense of penetration into the content of the *Guide*. It is based on the best explanations found in the previous commentaries with numerous additions. There are, however, places in which the commentator introduces foreign ideas into the text of which the explanation of the second chapter forms an illustration. In it he tries to ascribe to Maimonides a definition of the term judgment which we find only in Kant, and he thus offers an explanation of a passage which not only deviates from that of all commentators but is contradicted by the plain and evident meaning of the words. The work, as a whole, taking in all its phases, however, represents a distinct contribution to Jewish philosophic literature.

iv. In addition to all these works, there are two anthologies, the *Antologia Pilisufit* by J. Klatzkin and the *Yalkut ha-Midot* (Selections from Ethical Literature) by Leon Roth. The first contains selections (a) from the principal works of the leading Jewish philosophers from Israeli to Nahman Krochmal, whether of works originally written in Hebrew or written in Arabic but translated into those languages; (b) from Hebrew translations of works of Arabic philosophers; and (c) from philosophic works still in manuscript. The anthology is compiled with the purpose that it serve as a source of illustrations for the dictionary of philosophical terms composed by the author, and includes such selections which bear a technical character and deal primarily with the fundamental philosophical problems. The book con-

tains brief biographical notes of the authors and translators of the works from which the selections were culled and explanatory notes of difficult passages. The latter are of great help in the understanding of the selections as far as they go, but they do not go far enough, for they do not explain numerous abstract passages and expressions. The anthology would have been of greater value if the notes were more copious.

The second, as its name indicates, contains selections primarily from the ethical works and is consequently of a popular nature. Its purpose, as the compiler states in the preface, is to serve as a source book for a better understanding of the principal conceptions of the essence of Judaism. The term ethics is, therefore, used in the title in a very broad sense and is to a degree inexact. The material is arranged according to a chronological order which is as follows: Selections from the Apocryphal and the Apocalyptic books, from the works of Philo and Josephus, from pre-Maimonidian philosophical literature, from the works of Maimonides, from the polemical literature, from the Mediaeval ethical works, and from modern philosophical literature. The last section includes primarily selections from the works of Mendelssohn, S. D. Luzzatto, N. Krochmal, and Hermann Cohen. The Talmudic and Midrashic literature is omitted on account of the numerous compilations of selections from it which were made previously. As the selections are comparatively popular and the book is intended for those who are well conversant with Hebrew there are no explanatory notes. The merit of the work consists mainly in the exercise of good judgment in selecting the excerpts and in the fine order of arrangement.

D. MYSTICISM

128. *WORKS ON MYSTICISM AND KABBALA*

i. The field of Jewish mysticism was not neglected by Jewish scholars during the period under discussion, but no works of great importance similar to those produced in the preceding period were written. A. S. Horodetzki, whose essays on Hassidism were noted by us above (Sec. 106), undertook in his work, *ha-Mistorin be-Yisrael* (Mysticism in Israel) to present a complete history of Jewish mysticism from early times to the end of the eighteenth century, in four volumes. But thus far only the first volume has appeared, and even that volume which deals with mysticism as reflected in early Jewish literature in the

Bible, the Apocrypha and Apocalyptic, the Talmud, and Midrashim hardly justifies its title. Without defining adequately what he means by mysticism and what are its fundamental concepts and views, the author plunges into his subject and attempts to find a dualistic conception of the Godhead even in the Biblical story of creation. He proposes the strange notion that *Ruah* spoken of in the second verse of the first chapter in Genesis, which is taken by all commentators to imply nothing more than the creative power of God, signifies the manifestation of God as the feminine element of the Godhead in creation. He bases his assertion on the fact that the word *Ruah* is used many times in the Bible as a feminine noun forgetting that it is used as many times as a masculine noun. He thus wants to see in the Biblical story of creation the origin of the later Kabbalistic theory which sees in the world a dual manifestation of male and female powers. Similarly, attempting to discover as many incarnations and personifications of God in the Bible as possible and make mysticism opposed to pure monotheism, he interprets the expression, *Ruah Elohim*, found in prophetic descriptions not as the spirit of God which is another term for the highest type of inspiration, but as an actual incarnation. Likewise, does he assert that the Talmudists interpreted the expressions the "Voice of God" and the "Word of God" found in the Bible not as metaphors, but as embodying a part of the essence of God, and even the word *Shekinah* which was used in the Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch as a device to remove anthropomorphisms in the Bible (Vol. I, Sec. 72) he claims that it implies not a spiritual entity created by God which appeared to the prophets in vision, but the incarnation of God Himself. He even attaches importance to the fact that *Shekinah* is a feminine noun. And all these fantastic suppositions are stated with an air of certainty, despite the fact that he offers no proof nor does he enter into an analysis of the metaphorical expressions in the Bible or the Agada. True to his fundamental conception of mysticism, noted by us above, which is that it is primarily intense religiosity and opposes the Law and especially its rigorous observance, he grossly exaggerates the antagonism of the prophets to practical religion, and in general misinterprets prophecy. This, however, does not prevent him from seeing in the precepts, especially in the cult of the Temple, a mystic way of the uniting of man with God, another expression of mysticism which to him is the prototype of the practical Kabbala (Vol. II, Sec. 105). This view, which is contrary

to all opinions of Jewish thinkers from Saadia to Hermann Cohen, and even to numerous statements in the Bible and Talmud, all of which see in the precepts merely instruction and means of discipline, is stated with certainty and without proof.

The place of proofs is taken by lengthy quotations from the Bible, Talmud, and Midrashim which practically constitutes half of the book. But no attempt is made to offer an interpretation of these quotations. An evident effort is made by the author to take the exotic expressions literally and deduce from them his conclusions, a method which is not only dubious but even unfair. Occasionally, though, we find some opinions which are acceptable and likewise there are a number of passages which contribute in a degree towards the tracing of a mystical current in early Judaism, but these do not make a history of mysticism.

ii. An earnest attempt was made by two English Jewish scholars, H. Sperling and M. Simon, to present to the uninitiated the content of the *Zohar*, the most important book of the Kabbala by translating it into English. The work, though, was executed with numerous limitations. First, the translation is devoted only to the *Zohar* in the narrower sense, namely to that part of the work which is called by that name, while all other portions which constitute a considerable part of the text of the original are omitted. Furthermore, even long passages in the *Zohar* proper which are marked as *Tosefta* i.e. Additions, are likewise omitted. Second, even the part translated is circumscribed in its usefulness. The authors were modest enough to admit that the prologue to the *Zohar* is highly enigmatical and that the true meaning of its content is a matter of conjecture and they, therefore, translated it literally. The same goes for other enigmatical passages. But even the less obtruse part which constitutes the bulk of the translation is also to a large extent literal, and in general no explanatory notes are given where such notes would have been of great help to the student. Moreover, the translators did not even incorporate all the scanty explanations which are given in the notes appended in the later editions of the *Zohar*. These explanations are helpful and clarify at times the obtruseness of the passages, and there was no reason for omitting them unless otherwise substituted. There are also occasionally omissions of expressions in the text which, though brief, contain deep meaning.*

On the other hand, great effort was made to bring order and system

* Cf. 37b original and 139 of translation where the words "to the *Zaddik*" are omitted, while the idea they contain i.e. that the righteous is the creator, is of interest.

into the text by paragraphing and by use of parentheses, and also by introducing modern punctuation marks. A large part of the translation reads smoothly and clarifies the content of this difficult book. The work is thus of much usefulness, though not in the measure that might have been expected of such an undertaking. The translation is preceded by an introduction by J. Abelson, the author of several books on Jewish mysticism. It deals more with the parts of the *Zohar*, authorship, and its influence on Jewish religion, but does not give a systematic exposition of the principal theories and views. It touches briefly on some of them, especially on those relating to the soul.

Much work in the field of Kabbala was done by G. Shalom of the Hebrew University at Jerusalem. He distinguished himself especially by his essays on the pre-Zoharite phase. These essays, however, are still scattered in various publications both in Hebrew and German. The only book he published on the subject is a bibliography of Kabbalistic literature.

BOOK IX
AMERICAN JEWISH LITERATURE

129. HISTORICAL SURVEY

"And though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase" (Job, VIII, 7). These words, uttered by Bildad the Shuhite in comforting Job, can well serve as a motto in the opening of our survey of American Jewish literature. From very modest attempts at literary expression made by American Jewry during the larger part of the last century, there developed and bloomed forth in the last half century—the period under discussion—an extensive literature, not in one language, but in all the three languages which are in vogue among the Jews of this country, English, Yiddish, and Hebrew. This literature is distinguished not only by its quantity but also by its quality and variety, for there is hardly a branch of letters and learning to which writers living in this country did not make notable contributions.

The reasons for such phenomenal growth and speedy development of this literature are not far to seek. A cursory glance at the history of American Jewry and the various stages of its development will solve the riddle. The statistical figures of the number of Jews in this country for the following years tell the tale. In 1826 the total number of Jews was 6000; in 1880, after the comparatively large influx of immigrants from Germanic countries and a small trickle from the East-European lands, it reached a quarter of a million; and in 1927 it attained the high figure of 4,228,009. It is quite evident, while making allowances for the natural increase of the Jews during the half century that elapsed between the years 1880 and 1927, that American Jewry represents in its great bulk a transplanted Jewry, and as such, its life, especially in its spiritual and intellectual aspects, while it displayed remarkable power of adjustment and acclimatization to the new environment in the midst of which it developed, could not possibly divest itself of the characteristics, tendencies, and views of the European Jewries whence large numbers of Jews of this country hail.

This dualism is still more marked in the case of the literary expressions of this Jewry. The literature of a social group or a people is not a plant of a few years growth, nor of a half century, nor even of a century. It needs time for its development. In certain cases it may rise in a short period, but its roots go deep in the recesses of time and draw nourishment from the life and culture of the people which has been developed and standardized for centuries. Where these conditions are missing there can be no literature deserving of that name. This was the case of American Jewry during the greater part of its existence. There was no well developed Jewish life and little of Jewish culture, and consequently, no Jewish literature; there were only sporadic attempts of little consequence. It is only in the last fifty or sixty years, when large numbers of Jews from various parts of Europe, especially from its eastern portion, were transplanted en masse and brought with them their traditions, views, and tendencies, as well as a considerable number of actual or potential literary forces, that a Jewish literature in the three languages mentioned began to be developed. Many of these writers had already made their debut in Yiddish or Hebrew in the countries whence they came, or even in European languages, and they represented an actual literary force. But still larger was the number of young men and women, swept along with the current of migration, who, by virtue of their education, Jewish and general, their intellectual and spiritual endowments, their knowledge of Jewish life and closeness to the Jewish spirit, were destined to make an attempt at literary expression, and these represented the potential literary force. A great part of the newly arrived settlers were either young men and women or on the border of middle age who were readers of secular literature in various languages, and in addition there was a minority of intellectuals to whom literature was a real need. The newcomers, being unable to satisfy their need with the general American literature which language they did not know and the spirit of which they did not understand, created a literature in the languages they knew best, largely Yiddish, and to a lesser degree, Hebrew. Later, when these settlers had adjusted themselves to their environment, there also arose a modest demand for an Anglo-Jewish literature, and that demand was in due time supplied.

From all that has been said, the causes of the rapid rise of the trilingual American Jewish literature can be readily surmised though only in a general way. However, to follow up the development of this literature in its tortuous relation to life would be out of place in a work

of this kind which aims more at a survey of literature rather than at a minute study of it. Suffice it therefore to say that the American Jewish literary output as a whole possesses the nature of a transferred literature, though in various degrees; the Yiddish and Hebrew works display it to a greater, and the English to a lesser, extent. It is this nature which determines its characteristics and endows it with its peculiar features.

The development of such a literature is conditioned by numerous circumstances and factors which brought about the process of its transfer from the old to the new soil. At times, not only are the writers and the forms transferred, but also a part of the literary environment in the form of the life of the people when settled in compact masses, who bring with them their traditions, views, and customs. This was the case with the bulk of American Jewish literature, namely its Yiddish and Hebrew divisions, and even the English division, which partook little of the character of a transferred literature, drew sustenance from the older environment. These circumstances and conditions, which are never static but in a constant flux, moulded and impressed the various divisions of the American Jewish literature and made them what they are. Bearing this in mind, we can infer some of the characteristics with which each of these divisions distinguishes itself.

Leaving out the other branches of Jewish literature and limiting ourselves to belles-lettres, we note that the Anglo-Jewish division is the weakest of the three component parts. On the whole, it is colorless, and in the words of its observant critics: "Its sky level is rather low and no skyscraper is visible on its horizon." The first characteristic of that literary division is the great disparity between fiction and poetry. The literatures of the various Jewries, especially those of Eastern Europe, are rich in poetry, primarily the Hebrew. The Jews, as a people, are endowed with a lyrical strain and always gave expression to their feelings in poem and song. The case is not so with Anglo-Jewish literature in this country. The amount of Jewish poetry produced by writers in that language is comparatively very small, and from the days of Emma Lazarus to the present, in spite of the many important events and the numerous tragedies which took place in the life of the Jewish people in the last three decades which should have been an incentive for soul-stirring poems, there did not arise a poet of note, with the exception of a few bards of recent date, whose poems attain a certain height. On the other hand, there is no lack of poets of Jewish descent who made noble contributions to general American poetry. The reason

for this deficiency is that the poetry of a people depends more upon the intensity of the love the poets bear for its life, traditions, and hopes, and their saturation with its spirit than on their general poetic ability. It is rare, indeed, for a stranger to possess a penetrating glimpse into the soul of a people and give expression to its feelings. The Anglo-Jewish writers are to a degree estranged from the entire complex of their spiritual heritage, and hence whenever an attempt was made by one of them to compose Jewish poetry and express the feelings and thoughts of the people, it lacked genuineness and depth.

Prose fared better; observation and technique contribute much to the perfection of fiction, and as a result Anglo-Jewish fiction is large in quantity, and at times, also distinguished in quality, but the general level is, as said, low. The reason for this is partly the lack of a well developed Jewish life, a life standardized and hallowed by the tradition of ages, and partly the superficial knowledge of that life which the writers, its portrayers, possess. Very few of the writers, who are children and grandchildren of the ghetto themselves, are at home in Jewish life, and even the earlier writers who were immigrants knew that life more from the external than from the internal aspect, and often had little sympathy with it. These writers cannot, when present-day Jewry was shattered, fall back, like their East-European Hebrew or Yiddish colleagues, on the life of a generation ago, and hence they are limited to the life of the American Jewish ghetto which has been in a state of transition for several decades, and as said, even that life they know only externally. As a result, the whole Anglo-Jewish fiction in this country bears the character of one produced by outsiders. And what is more, much of it was produced with an eye for the outside world and not for home consumption. Hence it abounds in exaggeration and in emphasis on the exotic. Finally, it suffers from a lack of scope; the life portrayed is primarily that of the compact masses in a few large cities, while the town and the small city have little share in that literature. Consequently, the life reflected in this fiction is not complete and is not typically American. There are exceptions, of course, and in spite of all that has been said, the stories and novels do portray Jewish life in this country to a great extent, even if they do not penetrate to its depth.

The Yiddish division of American Jewish literature partakes to a much greater degree of the character of a transferred literature. It is closer to the Jewish spirit and reflects all the tendencies of Jewish literature in modern times, though in varying degrees. For a time,

during the first three decades of the period under discussion, when a large part of the masses belonged to the ranks of the laborers and were led by East-European intellectuals of a socialistic ideology, the socialistic tendency predominated. It did not take long and other tendencies, the nationalistic and even the traditional, began to assert themselves. However, the bent towards a modified radical view of Jewish life is still dominant but far from predominating.

In this literature, there is no great discrepancy between poetry and prose. Both of these literary expressions are equally balanced. Not only is the production of poetry distinguished by its quantity but also by its quality. It is both universalistic and nationalistic; the cry of the individual suffering from social maladjustment and the plight of the nation both find expression therein. It echoes the vicissitudes of the life of a people during the last half a century in their tragic aspect, but also, to a degree, in that of hope and aspiration.

Of a similar character is the Yiddish fiction, though it did not rise to the level of the poetry. The writers, hailing in the great majority from the ghettos of Eastern Europe, saturated with the Jewish spirit and endowed with a fair measure of Jewish knowledge, are to a large extent at home in Jewish life and portray it with varying degrees of sympathy. For a time, though, as said, it was dominated by the spirit of class struggle and the scope of the life reflected was consequently narrow and limited. As things changed in American Jewry, its horizon widened and all phases of Jewish life found expression in Yiddish fiction. However, due to the fragmentary state of the contemporary Jewish life in general, and the American in particular, some of the writers, like their European brethren, turned to the more standardized and typical life of the near past for their source and delineated it with different degrees of skill. As a result, American Yiddish literature forms an important part of the literature of the period and the line of demarcation between it and the rest of this particular literary production is but slight.

The Hebrew literature produced in this country displays to a much larger degree than the English and Yiddish the character of a transferred literature. The majority of the writers had already made their debut before their arrival on these shores and are merely continuing their activity on American soil without much change in its character. Even those who gained their literary spurs in this country, with very few exceptions, were not raised in the milieu of American Jewry but

brought their environment along with them. In fact, this literature is a replica of the types of literary expression prevalent in the European and Palestinian centers, and reflects the main tendencies extant in the Hebrew literature of the period as a whole. In general, its relation to American Jewish life is loose and its growth and development are stimulated more by artificial means than by natural factors.

The extraordinary conditions under which American Jewry developed, its speedy growth, the type of Jews who constituted the bulk of the mass immigration before 1900, the change in their economic life, the severe struggle for adjustment to an entirely new environment, the swift process of complete or partial Americanization—all these brought about a disintegration of the standardized type of Jewish life without evolving in its place a new type of a definite character. The time may not be far when such a type will come into being, but up to the present, American Jewish life in its entirety presents a multicolored aspect and is of a fragmentary character. It resembles a mighty and wide stream in which diverse currents flow side by side without intermingling, or to use another figure, a landscape shaped, moulded, and brought into being by a series of upheavals, in which the various strata are contiguous to each other, but are not united into one uniform mass. The last two decades, partly due to the momentous vicissitudes in the fate of world Jewry and partly to the regular course of the life process, undoubtedly brought a considerable change also in the life of American Jewry. Powerful forces for unification and standardization were, and are, at work, and to a degree, that life begins to assume some definite form. However, the rifts are still there and the clefts are still gaping.

Under such a state of affairs and in a fragmentary life of this type, the place of Hebrew was, and still is, greatly circumscribed, and the roots it struck in the soil are very slender. In the East-European Jewish life, Hebrew was the main vehicle of Jewish culture, whether of the religio-social type or later of the secular-nationalistic type. In Palestine it is a spoken language. In America it is neither, for while there is religion in American Jewry there is no religio-social culture in the proper sense of the term, and again, English and Yiddish are the two languages which American Jews employ in daily life, while Hebrew is merely an intellectual luxury limited to a close circle. As a result, the development of Hebrew literature in this country was not caused by a desire for the satisfaction of a need on the part of the Jewish masses or broad strata in American Jewry, but was primarily due to a need felt

by scattered groups of Jews still steeped in Jewish culture. It was somewhat stimulated by the national or Zionist ideal which theoretically advocates the spread of knowledge and the cultivation of Hebrew. To a degree it can be asserted that American Hebrew literature was primarily created by its writers. The last three decades brought to these shores numbers of Hebrew writers or would-be writers, and these created, in spite of difficulties, with the help of circles of lovers of Hebrew composed largely of arrivals in the last thirty years, a literature of considerable quantity.

The artificiality of its growth and the conditions of its development did not, however, lower its quality. It was only during the earlier years when the Hebrew literary productivity was sporadic, the readers few, and Jewish cultural life at its ebb, that it displayed the character of a poor imitation of the Haskalah literature, but things changed with the turn of the century and it constantly gained in quality. There were two factors which brought about the rise of American Hebrew literature to a higher plane. The first is the higher cultural level of its readers, and the second, the very condition of its development, namely the fact that it is a transplanted literature. The standards prevailing in the European and Palestinian Hebrew literature serve as ideals also to American writers even if they do not always live up to them.

Its characteristics resemble largely those of the Hebrew literature of the period. It is entirely secular and permeated with the nationalistic spirit. It excels in poetry, in criticism, essay writing, and publicistic. Its fiction, on the other hand, suffers from many shortcomings. On the whole, there are few Hebrew novels. The main reason for the lower quality of Hebrew fiction is its loose connection with Jewish life. The life of American Jewry is too fragmentary to be portrayed adequately and many of the writers are not fully acquainted with it. As a result, most of the themes deal with the life the writers know best, that of the younger Jews and Jewesses in the last three decades which, as we have seen (Sec. 6), was baseless, shattered, and torn, and consequently its portrayal, if not done by a master, is colorless. However, there are notable exceptions.

Similarly, the extensive literature in the various branches of learning produced in the three languages is to a large degree of a transferred nature. Most of the scholars who made important contributions in any field of Jewish knowledge merely continued the work they began earlier in life in European countries, and even the greater part of the younger savants who made their debut in this country brought their

knowledge with them. It is only of very recent date that a few native scholars made their appearance. Like the Hebrew literature, American Jewish scholarship is in a great measure an artificial product and was created largely through the efforts of the writers themselves without satisfying a need or a demand on the part of any stratum of Jewry. American Jewry is still in the process of adjusting itself to the environment; and the events which took place in world Jewry during the last twenty-five years, since the beginning of the World War thrust upon it numerous grave problems of a material nature, as well as premature leadership in the affairs of the people—these diverted its energy in a different direction than in the creation of cultural values. Consequently, Jewish learning and its corresponding literary expression became the concern of individuals and not of the group, and hence their detachment from life. American Jewish learning follows, in the main, the pattern of that species of literature in Germany which had as its motto, "research for research sake." The results of this comparatively extensive learning were never made to bear upon the religious, educational, social, and intellectual problems of Jewry in the midst of which it was produced. Occasionally, we meet with some exceptions, but these are sporadic and ill-adjusted to the task.

130. EPOCHS OF AMERICAN JEWISH LITERATURE

Due to the peculiar conditions under which the American Jewish literature developed and to the brief span of its existence, it is difficult to fix its lines of demarcation and speak of real epochs in its growth. If such can be done at all, it is largely on the basis of quantity of production and only partly on qualitative differentiation. Accordingly, we can discern in it three epochs of unequal length: (1) from 1800-1870, (2) from that year to the beginning of the World War, and (3) from then to the present. During the first epoch, Jewish literature was sporadic and intermittent; books were published at long intervals and literary expression consisted, from 1840 on, primarily of journalistic and periodical writing. Furthermore, it was almost unilingual; English was largely the medium of expression, supplemented during the two decades, from 1850 to 1870 by German—the first Hebrew book published in the nineteenth century appeared in 1864—and the religious motive was predominating.

From the seventies on, literature became trilingual, and turned mainly secular. But with the exception of the Yiddish element, the

English and the Hebrew parts still retained their sporadic character, though in varying degrees. The books of the first were written primarily for the large American reading public to afford it a glimpse of Jewish life, while those of the second were produced for a small scattered group who still harbored in their hearts an attachment for the Holy Tongue.

From the outbreak of the War, due to the rise of a second generation of English speaking Jews, on the one hand, and the spread of the nationalistic movement, the initiation of cultural movements, and the influx of writers and a large number of intellectual immigrants, on the other hand, there entered a great change also in the literature. All divisions lost the character of intermittency and became regularly flowing currents of different width. Works in English were written not only for the general but also for a Jewish reading public which manifested a need of such books. Yiddish lost the masses, it is true, but instead succeeded in creating a fair reading public to whom the cultivation of that language has become an ideal and a substitute for many other Jewish values. Hebrew, likewise, was strengthened by an influx of a thin layer of immigrants to whom the language and its literature is of prime importance, as well as by the spread of nationalism which popularized its study in certain circles. The result was an increase in quantity and an improvement in the quality of the works produced in that tongue.

CHAPTER XIII

ANGLO-JEWISH LITERATURE

131. ANGLO-JEWISH FICTION

The beginnings of Jewish fiction in the English language were, as that of the general literature, very modest. Literary expression of American Jewry began with periodicals, the first of which was *The Jew*, published in 1818 by Henry Jackson. It was short lived and for a long time no attempt was made to establish another periodical. It was only after the second wave of Jewish immigration was well under way, in the early forties, that there began to appear another English Jewish monthly, *The Occident*, edited by Isaac Leeser and published by him regularly for a period of thirty years. Numerous other periodicals appeared during the years 1840-1880, some of them of shorter and some of longer duration. All of these periodicals had a religious coloring and busied themselves primarily with questions of reforms in the divine service or with problems of social organization. They also dispensed to their readers bits of Jewish knowledge through the medium of short articles on Jewish history or literature. As a result, the place of belles-lettres in these periodical publications was very limited. Yet the editors felt that they must print from time to time a few stories portraying Jewish life or a poem or two. There was no shortage of poems for there were many singers who injected a religious or an historical note in their verse, and that satisfied the editors. The case was different with Jewish fiction; there were hardly any writers who could produce an original story portraying Jewish life. Under the circumstances, the editors and writers turned to translations, mostly from the German and to a slight degree from the Hebrew.

Translations from the German, at first a necessity, became for a few decades a habit, for even in the eighties and early nineties when the number of Jews increased considerably and Jewish life began to assume some definite form, the Jewish Publication Society, which undertook to spread Jewish knowledge and literature among the English-speaking

Jews of this country, still imported its stories from Germany, and either had them translated from that language or published works written in English which portrayed Jewish life in that country when the ghetto was still existent and when it still possessed a distinct flavor. The reason for such importation is not far to seek. The more cultured and the more economically stabilized stratum of American Jewry in those days were the so-called German Jews. They were also the more Americanized and the masters of English. Consequently, they were not only the dispensers of Jewish culture, but its creators in English garb, for both the publishers and the writers hailed from that stratum. Small wonder that the literature produced by these people portrayed the life they knew or thought they knew best.

Soon, however, Russian Jewry, on account of the pogroms and the resultant mass-migration to this country, began to claim the attention of writers of fiction, and they turned to that Jewry for material for their stories. The writers who, as said, had never been in Russia, hardly knew that life, but neither they nor the publishers were critical, and on the basis of scraps of information gleaned from the tales of immigrants they concocted stories about the Jews of that country in which suffering was the main theme, portraying Jewish life there.

As a result, there was produced a crop of short stories and a few novels, which either were translated from the German, or have German Jewish life as their theme, or deal with phases of Russian Jewish life of the type described. Of such a character are *Stories of Jewish Home Life* by S. H. Mosenthal; *Voegile's Marriage and Other Tales* by Louis Schnabel; *The Idyls of the Gass* by Martha Wolfenstein; *From the Heart of Israel* by B. Drachman, and others belonging to the German type of fiction. They all deal mostly with the German or Bohemian Jewish life of the early nineteenth century. Their artistic quality is not very high, but they are permeated with a Jewish spirit and with sympathy for the life they describe. *In the Pale*, a collection of short stories by Henry Iliowizi, and *Rabbi and Priest*, a novel by Milton Goldsmith deal with episodes in Russian Jewish life. The writers are not without skill and possess narrative ability, but the content is fantastic and bears slight relation to actual life.

Meanwhile, American Jewry was growing by leaps and bounds; tens of thousands of immigrants were flocking to these shores annually. They came from different countries, Russia, Galicia, Rumania, each group bringing with it shreds of their old environments, which differed

in dialect—though they all spoke Yiddish—manners, attitude towards life, and customs. All these groups congregated in large ghettos in a few cities and began to adjust themselves to a totally strange and new milieu. There was then in formation the greatest and the most unique “melting pot” in Jewish history of a double character. First, there went on in these new large ghettos a process of inner fusion of the different groups within Jewry itself, and second, the process of adaptation and acclimatization of all the groups to the external environment. This process was a slow one, for the very compactness of the masses retarded the progress; still its effects were powerful. Great changes were going on in the life of these masses; it was being reshaped and remoulded in all its phases and forms—economically, religiously, socially, and culturally.

As a decade or two passed, that life became still more complicated, for meanwhile a new generation arose, sons and daughters who were either born in this country or received their education and training here and whose aspect of life was totally different from that of their parents. Some of them left the ghetto and went into other fields, brighter, wider, and richer in opportunities, but the majority of them, too young to escape, stayed and struggled, in numerous ways, with their parents whose ways of life had become totally strange to them, with the immediate environment in which they moved and which they attempted to change.

As more years passed, the canvas of Jewish life became more and more kaleidoscopic. The process of Americanization set in. The earlier immigrants gradually adjusted themselves at least externally, especially economically, and began to climb the ladder of success; they built up industries, forsook the old habitats and formed new ones, brighter, more opulent in appearance, but ghettos nevertheless. However, the old forms of life, old habits, mannerisms, idioms, and usages of speech still held sway, and clashes and incongruities between the external Americanization and their inner selves ensued. The life of these semi-Americanized groups presented quaint, exotic aspects, little islands in the surging general American life. And all this time, the old ghettos, or the newly-formed ones, were filling up with new immigrants, who took the place of the former denizens and who in turn went through the same process of adjustment, but under different conditions, some more favorable, and some less favorable. It was easier for the later arrivals to acclimatize themselves to the external aspects of American life for these already penetrated the ghetto, but the eco-

conomic struggle was more difficult as opportunities grew less. To complicate matters, there developed in Jewry the struggle between the classes and the masses, the newly rich employers and the multitudes of employed. This struggle caused wide reaching effects; it popularized socialism among the masses, it changed their religious, cultural, and social views, and generated numerous clashes in Jewry, lending new color to its life.

This growing, developing, and expanding life of American Jewry, rich in color, full of light and shadow, replete in tragedies and comedies, began to attract the attention of writers or would-be writers of fiction, and a new fiction portraying American Jewish life made its appearance. It began to be produced by writers who were children of the ghetto themselves who had mastered the English language as early as the late nineties, and from that time on it continued in a steady stream growing in quantity, from the end of the first decade of this century until today, especially since it found favor with the general reading public. But, alas, that rich colorful life did not find its master or masters. Among the numerous writers of Anglo-Jewish fiction there is not one who can compare favorably with a Zangwill, the poet of the London Jewish ghetto. Not only is the portrayal of Jewish life limited to the dwellers in the large cities and the life of the Jews of the smaller city or the town is almost completely ignored, but even the ghetto life is not reflected in its entirety nor in its most important phases. In fact, only the external phases were understood and portrayed by the writers who gave us shreds of that complicated checkered life and at times the more able among them afforded us only a glimpse into the inner aspect. As a result, we have the portrayal of the crust of that life and frequently the repellent phase of the crust, but little of its soul.

Even that crust had several layers and phases, and it will be of interest to us to note the reflection of these phases in Anglo-Jewish fiction. The fundamental and the most projected aspect of the ghetto life in its earlier days was poverty. Poverty, that bane of human life which, according to the Talmud, is equal in suffering to death, and which was the grim companion of these immigrants in their old home, in the "town" of Eastern Europe—from which they fled to the land of golden opportunities—did not forsake them in the first years of their sojourn in this country. Coming as they did without money and without knowledge of the language and the ways of life, and the great majority without skill in any trade, large numbers turned to the only trade

they could learn in the shortest time—the needle or clothing trade—which at the time was in the hands of their more fortunate brethren, German and Polish Jews who preceded them in the migration to this country. These were the days of the sweatshop of ill repute. A considerable number of immigrants turned to peddling, another occupation which, due to conditions, was hard and unprofitable at first. Both shopworkers and peddlers, constituting the bulk of the newly arrived settlers, were miserably poor, even poorer than in their former homes; and in addition they lacked the comfort of religion, tradition, and even of the free boon of nature, air and sunshine, huddled as they were in tenements, in narrow and dirty rooms. Long hours of labor and ill nourishment deprived them of health. Poverty has its peculiar world, where due to the main cause, many ancillary things besides suffering take place, and at times even humorous incidents. That world was fully portrayed; attempts at delineating certain phases had already been made in the late nineties, and stories began to appear in which the life of the ghetto was described mostly from its tragic aspects, but some writers turned their attention to lighter aspects.

The stories bore euphuistic names, such as *In the Gates of Israel* and *Contrite Hearts* by Herman Bernstein, or *Ghetto Silhouettes* by D. Warfield, and similar titles. Several bore less dignified names, such as *Yokel the Imported Bridegroom* by A. Cahan. They all dealt with ghetto life in the clutches of poverty. Cahan, himself a graduate from the shop and a leader of the working masses, described the life of the worker, but he had an eye for the lighter aspects of that life and drew some caricatures of it with skill. Bernstein, in his stories, wrote of various things, of the tragedy of the aged cantor discharged by his congregation because his Old World melodies were disparaged by the semi-Americanized members; of the spinster shopworker who longs for companionship (*Alone*); and of the discomfited would-be bigamist who left his wife at home and is about to be engaged to a maiden of his choice, but whose plan is frustrated by his townsmen who surprise him by bringing his wife to the engagement party (*The Straight Hunchback*), and of similar episodes. There is little psychology or art in these stories, but mere narration of episodes of ghetto life. On the whole, there is little variety of themes. These themes were common in the incipient Yiddish literature and the writers borrowed them from it. Yet even this early literature produced a writer whose stories really reflect the tragedy of Jewish life at the time. This was Bruno Lessing (Ru-

dolph Block) whose *Children of Men* expresses the best that there was in this Anglo-Jewish fiction during its early stage.

It is a collection of stories each relating a single episode in the life or the lives of the toilers in the sweatshop or other Jewish characters who struggled in the ghetto in order to keep body and soul together. It is not, however, the scenes of poverty which move us, but its dire results, the frustration of all hopes, and the essentially human quality of the characters which the author discloses to us. We are stirred to the depths by the opening story, *The End of Our Task*, in which we are introduced to Braun and Lizechen, two operators in a shop, whose love for each other is strong, though they know that it cannot last long, for Lizechen is tubercular and the end is slowly approaching. Braun takes his beloved to a free exhibition at a picture gallery, where Lizechen is charmed by a landscape picture which reminds her of her old environment, for her love of nature was not stifled in spite of the airless shop and her dingy room in the tenement house. Shortly after the visit she falls sick and in delirium raves about the picture. Braun steals the picture from the gallery and places it on the bed so that her gaze might rest on it in her last moments. When she dies he returns the picture, but is caught, and not being able to explain the reason for his act, is sent to prison for three years. A similar moving story is *Urim and Tumim*. The story is short, very short. Urim and Tumim were the names of two dolls belonging to a little motherless girl, the daughter of a poor cloakmaker, which kept her company during her father's absence. She once heard her father read the Bible and the names caught her fancy. For her sake, in order to pay a woman to look after her, her father worked as a strike-breaker in the shop during a strike, but when the strike ended he was discharged. The wolf entered the door and cold and hunger ended the life of the little girl. Urim and Tumim were buried with her. There are no attempts at psychological analysis, but a mere narration and description of the tragedies which occurred in secluded corners in the great ghetto of New York. In *The Unconverted*, the writer touches upon another phase of the tragic life of the ghetto of those days hardly noted by other writers—the struggle of the religious Jew to observe his religion in spite of adversities. The unconverted is a dying Jew who is pointed out by his friend to a missionary as a symbol of Jewish obstinacy. The old man toiled for years until he gained a fortune, opened a bank and prospered, but lost his entire fortune one Sabbath day. In time of a crash he refused to keep

the bank open on the Sabbath; the bank closed, but he paid the depositors with his own savings and was thrown back to where he had started. Poverty ultimately broke him but he remained unconverted. There are other stories written in a lighter vein, but the main motive in all, the struggle with poverty and its grim results, is seldom missing.

Things began to change in that life; many of the first generation immigrants succeeded in adjusting themselves and gradually emerged from their poverty into a better and more prosperous life. This transition absorbed the interest of the writers for a time who turned to the new phase of Jewish life. But poverty was not abolished from the ghetto for a long time; new immigrants took the place of the earlier ones, and they in turn went through the same process, and their life in turn demanded expression, which was ultimately given in Anzia Yezierska's (1885) stories, *Hungry Hearts*. As a woman to whom love is an important part of life, she employed this motive in her stories to a great extent. Her characters, young, immigrant women working in the shops, conscious of their loneliness and the misery of their environment, are pining for love and companionship which would lift them out of the squalor around them. To one, love is revealed through the passing interest of a young instructor of sociology who comes to the slums to study the life of the people and rents a room in the tenement house where she acts as janitress. It ends in disappointment, but the feeling acts as a stimulant and arouses her to self-fulfillment, to a striving to occupy a place in the world, or in her language, "to become a person." She even inoculates her suitor, the best operator in the shop, with that feeling (*Wings and Hunger*). Another falls in love with her night school teacher, which love likewise fills her with a strong passion for uplifting herself to his level, and strange to say, her strong emotionalism communicates itself to him and the story has a happy ending (*The Miracle*). Yezierska has, however, an eye for other emotions in the life of her characters, and one of them is a sense of beauty. In a very skilful manner she depicts in *Lost Beauty* the tragedy of a woman of the tenements who, in her longing for beauty, paints her kitchen white to resemble that of her patroness, Mrs. Preston, for whom she occasionally washes. She does it in honor of her son who is about to return from France. She does not enjoy the beauty of that kitchen for long, for her landlord seeing the improved state of her rooms, raises the rent twice, and she is evicted at the very moment her son returns. She is quite skilful in her description of misery in the homes of the tenement

dwellers, especially in the life of the mothers harassed by the grave problem of feeding the children on their return from school, and in reproducing their monologues which express bitterness at their fate and deep love for life in spite of suffering. She also notices, what so many writers missed, the tragedy of maladjustment of those who, having spent a large part of their lives in poverty, suddenly acquire affluence. This is vividly pictured in the sketch of the life of Hannah Breine who, when her children grow up and become rich, is transported from the tenements to a hotel on Riverside Drive. She makes an attempt to return to her old environment but finds that also impossible and thus remains suspended between two worlds. There is much exaggeration and miraculous in her stories which do not agree with life but also much of reality which reveals another angle in the life of the American ghetto in the stage of poverty.

There is also some fine description of the life of the immigrants in the Boston ghetto in their struggle with poverty in the autobiographical novel, much overrated in its time, *The Promised Land*, by Mary Antin. It attracted the attention of American readers by her description of life in the Pale, which occupies half of the book and which offered them a glimpse into a quaint world, though it is, on the whole, external and little artistic. They were also impressed by the emotionalism of the writer and her exuberance in the praise of opportunities in this country. But the more somber part of the book, the chapters in which she describes the life of the family in the slums of East Boston and Chelsea are prosaic and very real. With a woman's intuition she noted, though rather briefly, the less apparent tragedy which took place in the souls of religious immigrants who were forced to forsake the old way of life and follow a strange one.

The second phase of American Jewish life, which demanded the attention of the writers of Jewish fiction and which soon began to be reflected in stories and novels, was the gradual adjustment of the immigrant to new conditions. Numerous workers slowly graduated from the sweatshop and became employers themselves, and turning to the only trade they knew—the manufacture of clothing—they established factories and began to climb the ladder of success. On the other hand, the peddlers who represented the second principal occupation of the early immigrants slowly became merchants and opened stores in the large cities as well as in numerous smaller cities and towns whither they spread after a few years of apprenticeship in the large ghettos, and

likewise waxed rich. It did not take long and the clothing and some ancillary trades were monopolized to a great extent by the erstwhile immigrants both as manufacturers and distributors, and they thus began to fill a definite function in American economic life.

The economic adjustment produced, of course, changes in the private lives of the immigrants. Affluence demanded change, in the home, in dress, habit, language, and manners. Adjustment to the changed inner conditions was more slow, for old habits and customs had a stronghold upon them, and while they found the acclimatization to business conditions comparatively easy, they could not divest themselves of their former selves in private and social life. Such situations were replete with many humorous incidents and tragedies of greater or lesser depth, and undoubtedly afforded rich and diversified material for portrayals of life. Unfortunately, it did not find its masters and only some of its more external layers are described to us in story and novel, the best of which are represented by the works of Abraham Cahan, Montague Glass, and Elias Tobenkin.

The novel of the first, *The Rise of Abraham Levinsky*, written in autobiographical form, namely as told by Levinsky himself—though we can hardly call it a classic as some enthusiasts do—presents a fair cross-section of the checkered Jewish life in the ghetto during two decades, from the middle of the nineties to the outbreak of the World War. It is this which constitutes its principal merit, for the portrayal of the life of the hero, Levinsky, is not distinguished by any special artistic qualities, nor by psychological insight. As is usual in such novels, Levinsky is given an Old World background in which he is described as a student of the *Yeshibah* and as a son of a poor widow whom the author unnecessarily causes to die a violent death. As many others who rebelled against poverty and the narrowness of their environment, he emigrates to America. Here he passes the whole gamut of the successful immigrant, from sweatshop worker to millionaire cloak manufacturer. Neither the character of Levinsky, as far as it is displayed in the novel, nor the author indicate the traits or qualities by means of which he attained such miraculous success. On the other hand, his sex life is greatly elaborated, and we are given detailed accounts of his affairs with the landladies in whose homes he boarded, not an unknown thing in the ghetto of those days. The only really interesting trait in Levinsky's character is that he could not entirely divest himself of his old environment, for in spite of his material success and the pleasures he often in-

dulged in, he cherished a hankering for learning, and at certain moments he regretted his entry into the business world rather than into college. He strove to atone for it by offering his hand to a poor, intellectual girl, but she spurned it and married a man of her class. Turning, however, to the American environment of Levinsky, we are fully compensated for the deficiencies in the description of the leading character himself. There are vivid pictures of the group life in the ghetto, of the metamorphosis of peddlers into merchants, of the business rivalry of cloak manufacturers, of the real-estate boom which swept New York Jewry in the first decade of the present century and the effects of its collapse, of the new life of the nouveau riche who left the East Side for brighter pastures, and of the life at the summer hotels in the mountains. All these scenes are described with skill and with an attempt at caricature, and as a result, the book, in spite of its comparative flatness, possesses great human interest.

Montague Glass wrote a whole series of novels in the two decades beginning with 1910 and ending with 1930, bearing the general title, *Potash and Perlmutter*, in which the humorous side of the life of the rising cloak manufacturer is primarily reflected. In the earlier novels he devoted himself mainly to the portrayal of one phase of that life, the business end of it.

Abe Potash and Mawrus Perlmutter, the two principal characters, are depicted mainly in their commercial activities and only side glances are cast on their private lives. Glass knew well the trade he was describing in all its tortuous ways and we have thus a series of episodes skilfully portrayed in which the humor arises from the peculiar concatenation of events, resulting in incongruities and in unexpected turns as well as from the impetuous activities of the characters. The author displays ingenuity in inventing some comical situations himself and also places numerous jests and wise sayings into the mouths of his characters, thus increasing the humor of that life. On the whole, though, there is much exaggeration in these so-called novels which are really collections of stories, yet there is no malice on the part of the author. Abe and Mawrus, with all their shrewdness, slyness, and eagerness to rise in the world of commerce and their endeavors to outdo their competitors, are not really money mad. They are good losers, and seem to glory more in the success of their schemes which proves to them the ingenuity of their own minds rather than in the resulting gains, though that is by no means of little importance. Of the two, Abe

Potash, the older partner, is the shrewder, in fact, too shrewd, and he is often caught in his own net. Perlmutter, the younger man, is simpler and more practical, and also the more modern. The vicissitudes of the two are, of course, placed within an environment teeming with other characters of similar type but of different occupations and stations in life. There pass before us a number of cloak manufacturers, salesmen of the trade, owners of large and small stores in different cities, as well as clerks and labor leaders, and we obtain glimpses of a number of phases of this world. Yet there is monotony in this world, for the air pervading it is of one kind, that of business and pursuit of material improvement. There is no trace of the traditional Jewish love of learning, the hunger for higher education which was often as strong in the hearts of the sons and daughters of the prosperous as in those of the poor, nor of the social and charitable inclinations. These stories undoubtedly gave a wrong impression to the outside world, for whose benefit they were written, of the life of the Jew during the period of adjustment and Americanization, which impression was strengthened by the patois English which the author puts in the mouths of all his characters, including those of the second generation. The author was after all an outsider who penetrated only the surface of the life he wrote about.

Tobenkin turned to a different corner of that phase of life during the process of adjustment in several of his novels of which *The God of Might* is the leading one. The theme in that novel is the acclimatization of the Jew outside the ghetto to a totally strange environment, that of a Christian community in a small town in the Middle West. His hero, Wasserman or Waterman, whom he supplies as usual with an Old World background, comes to Lincoln early in the nineties of the last century. He is the only Jew in the town. He begins as a clerk in a general store and ends as the owner of a department store. The upward struggle and his gradual absorption into the life around him is delineated in detail but the divesting of his former self is not fully analyzed. It is, of course, attended by some qualms, but not of a deep tragic nature. He even marries a Gentile girl without much struggle. The slight remorse that he experiences is allayed by his liberal-minded uncle, Jacob Gold, of Chicago. The tragic part comes only at the end, when after years of married life he begins gradually to feel the social isolation, though it is more passive than open, in which he and his family are placed when the line of demarcation between Jew

and Christian increases due to the influx of more Jews in Lincoln. At that time, his old self comes to life again to a degree, but not sufficiently to make him move to Chicago. The story ends abruptly with Samuel straying into a Jewish synagogue in the Chicago ghetto on the eve of the Day of Atonement and hearing the cantor chanting the prayer, "God of Might," he too mumbles the words, "God of Might, give me might to bear my fate." There is a general colorlessness about the whole story though it touches a vital point—the tragedy of the assimilated Jew. The theme, however, found better masters. It may be of interest to note that there is no prayer "God of Might" which is chanted by the cantor on the eve of the Day of Atonement.

The two decades after the World War mark a great rise in the productivity of Anglo-Jewish fiction in this country. On the one hand, there grew up a younger generation of Jews who, though woefully deficient in Jewish knowledge and on the whole estranged from the traditional ways of Jewish life, yet had a general interest in the fate of their brethren and in their life, which interest was strengthened by such movements as Zionism in its various manifestations, relief activities, and similar tendencies. On the other hand, the post-War events in Europe, the rise of Jew hatred on the Continent, the growth of narrow chauvinism in the life of nations, which were echoed in a degree also in this country, brought the Jew once more into the limelight, and he and his life became a favorite subject of literary interpretation. A demand for fiction which should portray Jewish life was thus created. The demand was soon supplied by the Jews themselves. Young writers began to produce stories and novels dealing with Jewish life and its vicissitudes. This flood of fiction defies classification, for all themes were exploited by these writers. Some of them resuscitated the old ghetto portrayals and reverted to former themes. Several of these, such as Michael Gold in his *Jews Without Money* and Charles Resnikoff in *Haunch Paunch and Jowl* portrayed the uglier side of the earlier ghetto life. The first devoted himself to the phase of poverty which placed the immigrant Jews in contact with vice and stressed the effects of such slum life upon the rising young generation. The second, though his theme is primarily the delineation of the life of a judge, a product of the ghetto, who attained his position by devious political methods in vogue in those days in New York politics, dwells with a certain delight upon scenes and episodes in the lives of the children of the ghetto, which are far from pleasing and which display the deteriorating effects of

poverty and a disintegrating Jewish life of the parents upon their offspring. Unfortunately, such episodes and such effects were real, and the first years of the bitter economic struggle of the immigrants with its consequent dire results undoubtedly left their mark upon Jewish life.

This phase, however, was not predominant in ghetto life. On the other hand, there were numerous brighter sides to it, and other writers, more charitable and more sympathetic, portrayed them. A favorite theme was the depiction of the rise of young men and women from the midst of squalor to positions of fame and importance, especially in the field of learning and literature. It is the old Jewish hunger for knowledge which served as the motive in the lives of these strugglers. Numerous stories, in which characters displaying various shades of idealism play the leading role, were written. *Aaron Traum* by Lester Cohen is typical of such novels. The principal character, Aaron, arrives in this country at the age of eleven with many hopes for a richer life in the land of golden opportunities, but he is soon disillusioned. The poverty of his father forces him to spend his early years in the sweatshop instead of in school. He hungers for learning, but in vain. Years pass in this struggle, but he finally acquires by dint of hard work in moments snatched from toil sufficient knowledge of English to understand books, and the road to knowledge is opened before him and he begins to climb the heights. He ultimately becomes a leading poet. Along with Aaron there is his father, Saul, who dreams of mechanical inventions, but his ambition is thwarted by poverty and ill adjustment to life. The ghetto life of those days is well portrayed in many scenes and the author seems to be fairly well acquainted with that life. There is an evident tendency to emphasize the ideal trait of the Jewish character, the yearning and hunger of Jewish children for learning and beauty. Even the very name, Traum, is symbolic, for it is German for dream, and Aaron is one of the dreamers of the ghetto. But with the best intentions of the author, the work possesses little art or psychological insight, for there is a vagueness about the striving of the hero. Much space is given to Aaron's struggles, but little to the actual expression of Aaron's personality.

Other writers, immigrants themselves, who in the long run became men of letters and who still remembered Jewish life in the Old World, utilized their reminiscences as themes of novels and stories. As a rule, these works are descriptions of scenes and episodes of that life loosely connected rather than fully developed stories possessing a plot which

gradually unfolds itself. Characteristic of this type of story is Irving Fineman's *Hear Ye Sons*. It is prefixed with a prologue in which the principal character, an American Jew, to whose autobiography the entire book is devoted, and who, by the way, is nameless, tells briefly about his children and his family. They are all, without exception, remarkably successful, and he is similarly prosperous as a lawyer. This, however, is only a pretext to call the work an American novel, for we are told little of his life in this country. The book is the hero's story of his life in the Old World from birth to his migration to America. It is not a novel, but as said, a series of descriptions of episodes, which are not peculiar to any one Jewish child or young man but to many. The author seemed to have heard many things about Jewish life in Russia and numerous anecdotes, including Agadic homilies, and he put them all in this book. In his descriptions of the Sabbath, instead of actually portraying how the Sabbath atmosphere pervaded even the poorest Jewish home and filled it with exultation, he quotes long stories from the Talmud and excerpts from prayers. He does it frequently also in other episodes and generally displays his learning to great excess. The result is artificiality and little art. Still, since the reading public for whom the book was intended is to a great extent ignorant of Jewish traditional life and customs, it possesses some interest for them.

A large number of writers, especially those who were never children of the ghetto themselves but belonged to families who were completely Americanized, many of German-Jewish parentage, turned to portraying the problems and tribulations of the intellectual Jew who, though estranged from his people, yet cannot be completely absorbed in the Gentile world in which he moves. Typical of such novels and stories are Ludwig Lewisohn's *The Island Within* and Paul Rosenfeld's *The Boy in the Sun*. In the first novel, the author, a literary man of the first order, a brilliant essayist and critic, who himself has gone through the painful experience of attempted assimilation and its consequent disillusion, endeavors to depict the futility of such attempt in his novel. His principal character or hero, Arthur Levy, a son of Germanized Jewish parents—his father's family originally hailed from Wilna—enters the American life apparently without handicaps, for beyond the knowledge that he is a Jew he carries no impediments of Jewish tradition or life. Yet, as early as his public school days he receives little jolts from his school fellows which remind him of his Jewishness and greatly confuse him. These are repeated in his high

school experience, and his confusion and mental disturbance grow. The situation is somewhat improved in his college years when he joins a small circle of liberally-minded intelligent American students who accept him as one of their own. Yet, his Jewishness is still a sore point with him, for by self-analysis he constantly stumbles on his inner isolation, as in spite of the fine spirit his colleagues display towards him, he finds that he does not belong to their world. He graduates, studies medicine, becomes a psychoanalyst, accepts a position in a state insane asylum, stumbles into difficulties on account of his kindness to patients, especially the Jewish, and resigns. His mental confusion reaches a crisis after he marries a Gentile girl, a literary woman who, though the daughter of a rural Christian minister, is liberally-minded and possesses advanced ideas on life and marriage. They mingle in literary circles which are composed mostly of Jews and a few Gentiles, but it is just in this world, where apparently the line of demarcation between Jew and Gentile is almost obliterated, that Arthur begins to feel his isolation sharply and his Jewish consciousness becomes stronger. He feels the tragedy of his assimilated Jewish confrères who strive to adapt themselves to the role they are playing, the emptiness of their world, their constant restlessness, and their rootlessness. A wall gradually rises between him and his wife, not of her making but through his feeling that there is a difference between them. He ends by separating from her, joining the staff of a Jewish hospital, and going on a medical relief mission to the Jews of Eastern Europe.

The problem is undoubtedly a vital one and is also treated by the author with skill, yet there is a certain vagueness about this treatment, nor is the moral which he wants to draw from the story—and the author states in fully two of the opening pages that a story must teach a moral—explicitly stated. Arthur's confusion is to a large degree personal for he is not so strongly rebuffed by the outside world, and it is primarily he and not his wife who raises the wall between them. And while the thesis of the author, that a Jew estranged from his own people is without root in any world, is largely true, one cannot help feeling that Arthur's tribulations are greatly increased by his own excessive sensitiveness and nervousness. The vagueness is increased by the mere negativeness of the hero's sentiments. His Jewishness consists largely in the feeling that he does not belong to the world in which he moves but not in any positive feelings towards Judaism and its values. Finally, it reaches its climax in the abrupt ending of the book. The implied

moral of the story is that a Jew is to live in the world as a proud Jew, conscious of his difference, but coöperating with all for a finer and better world. But that solution is not given. Arthur's joining a medical relief mission is no solution. It would have been better if the author had economized in his excessive analysis of the state of Arthur's mind and in the numerous essays on many subjects dispersed through the book, and instead would have given a sketch of Arthur's return to Jews and Judaism. But it seems that he found it more difficult to state the solution how to live as a conscious and proud Jew in the general world than to treat the purely negative side of the life of the assimilated Jew.

This motive, namely the plight of the assimilated Jew who strives to divest himself of his Jewishness completely, and the tragic results often ensuing from such endeavors is the very woof out of which all stories of Jewish life written by Lewisohn are woven. He returns to it again and again, and presents that plight in his volume of collected short stories, *This People*, under different aspects. At times, as in *The Saint*, he pictures the tragedy which results in the life of the completely assimilated Birenbaum family out of the conflict between the parents who cling to the ideology of assimilation and cosmopolitanism, and the son, Leon, in whom the feeling of Jewishness is revived causing him to sever his relations with his parents and to change his way of life entirely. The bewilderment of the older Birenbaum at the collapse of his world, at the failure of his ideals, and their repudiation by his own son is drawn with skill and psychological penetration. The lion's share of the author's sympathy is, of course, received by Leon who refuses to share his father's wealth, settles in the East Side of New York, leads a life of poverty, and devotes himself to the amelioration of the poor of his own people, and as a result, has his life cut short by disease. There are also several fine portrayals of episodes in which the wholesomeness of Jewish life, the complacency of the soul, and the spiritual satisfaction one finds in such mode of living are reflected. But the real strength of the story lies in its negative side, in the depth of the tragedy presented by the hollowness and emptiness of the life of the other members of the Birenbaum family which ends in a complete void.

Another aspect of the tragedy of escaping Judaism is revealed to us in the *Writ of Divorcement* in which the author endeavors to show how this constant effort on the part of the assimilated Jew or Jewess to dissimulate, to obliterate every vestige of conduct which may be called Jewish, which often results in self hate, blights life and even love it-

self. The marriage of Myrtle Kessler, a typical representative of that type and a Jewishly conscious young man ended in failure a short time after it took place for no other reason but the resistance of the wife to the heritage of her race which she endeavored to eradicate. It was the self-hate of Myrtle and the fear that the family life may be impressed with some Jewish traits which caused her to inhibit the love she bore her husband and break away from him.

At other times, as in *The Bolshevik*, Lewisohn endeavors to attribute even the extreme radical inclination of some Jews not to individual proclivities, but to the same cause, the futile effort to escape Judaism, which results in an unhealthy psychosis expressed in a desire to destroy existing social forms. There is no doubt that there is much exaggeration in Lewisohn's presentation of the problem, and that his stories possess a note of monotony, for not only do they contain one theme with slight variations, but also much repetition of the publicistic or essay material which our author likes to insert in his fiction. Still, the problem he deals with is of great importance and really represents a leading aspect of the complicated Jewish life in modern times. As such, Lewisohn's stories and novels are undoubtedly among the best of English Jewish literature produced in this country. It may be added that the author made an honest effort to acquaint himself with Jewish customs, data of Jewish life which are referred to in the stories, or the quotations from Jewish literature cited.

132. HISTORICAL NOVELS

There were also several attempts by Jewish writers to produce historical novels, but not with great success. The first of these is *Moses* by Louis Untermeyer. The life of the outstanding figure in Jewish history served frequently as a favorite theme for Jewish poets, and several episodes in his life, especially the tragic moments of his death were utilized by a number of bards as motives for lyrical poems. Untermeyer, poet though he is, took the life of Moses not as a theme for a poem but for a novel. However, he unfortunately approached this great subject not as a Jew permeated with the spirit of reverence towards the man who impressed his spirit upon the entire history of his people, but as an outsider who is intrigued by the stories or legends of the Bible and considers them interesting enough for a cleverly written novel. Moreover, though the story is entitled *Moses*, and he is to a degree the principal character, the intention of the author seemed to

have been to give a modern version of the entire Exodus episode together with all the subsequent events. Influenced by certain theories of modern Egyptologists who trace the rise of monotheism to the Egyptian king, Amenophis IV, otherwise called Akhnaton, who lived in the first half of the 14th century B.C.E., he takes the liberty of placing Moses in his time—since as he says there is a difference of opinion among scholars on the date of Moses—and what is more, makes him half Egyptian, the son of Amram and an Egyptian princess, the sister of Amenophis III.

Moses is brought up in the palace together with Amenophis IV and thus the author makes monotheism a common invention of the two. However, while Amenophis remains the poet and the religious seer *par excellence*, Moses is mastered by a passion for leadership, and his deep religiosity develops only gradually, in a spurting and hesitating manner. In the narration of events, Untermeyer follows the Bible closely but gives the narrative a complete modern character, as he makes Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, a gentleman farmer and a mild atheist and even makes him say on meeting Moses, "My best friends are Hebrews." The Exodus was, according to him, made possible through a number of circumstances: the civil strife in Egypt, the rise of the Hebrew laborers, Moses' demand for freedom, and a coincidence of natural catastrophies, known in the Bible as plagues and interpreted by the Egyptians as miracles on the part of the stronger God. The Red Sea was crossed at low ebb, the revelation at Sinai represents merely the ascension of Moses to the summit for meditation on the problem of God, and the simultaneous outbreak of a thunderstorm. Aaron is represented as a shrewd, half-cynical priest-politician who helps to make the laws and the ritual, knowing their value in the life of the masses. Moses, on the other hand, is opposed to ritual but yields to necessity. Since it is a novel in which love should play an important part, Moses is made to have two "affairs," one with the younger sister of his wife and the other, at a rather advanced age, with an attractive Ethiopian woman.¹ On the whole, though, the author strives honestly to delineate the character of Moses as an exceptional personality by divesting him of the traditional halo, the picture we obtain of that leader is rather vague. During a great part of the story, Moses is not even clear about

¹ The author follows the rather traditional interpretation of the Hebrew word, *ha-Ishah ha-Kushit* in Num. XII, 1 as the Ethiopian woman. As one, though, who delved in archaeological literature, he should have known that modern Semitic scholars assert that the *Kushit* was a woman from a group related to the Midianites.

his own faith, and he is constantly torn between his desire to scale the heights of religious contemplation and the passion for leadership. Only at the end of the journey, at the gates of Canaan, Moses finally reaches the heights of religious thought. The author turns the episode of Moses remaining on this side of the Jordan from a tragedy, as related in the Bible, into a voluntary renunciation of the world. Like Akhnaton, he becomes a hermit and a pantheist and chooses solitude. There is, especially in the pantheism of Moses, a misunderstanding of Jewish monotheism and a complete failure to comprehend its historical aspect. There is little poetry in that drama, but on the other hand, there is skill, cleverness, and ingenuity.

The other historical novel is *The Last Days of Shylock* by the prolific writer, Lewisohn. It can hardly be called a novel, for the plot can be condensed in a few lines. It purports to be a description of the life of Shylock, after judgment was passed on him in the court at Venice, set in a frame of historical events which took place in the Jewish world during the sixteenth century. Taking the cue from Shakespeare himself who, with all his dislike of the Jews, could not overlook their deep tragedy and makes Shylock utter one of the bitterest accusations of the Jew against the Christian world for their persecution through the ages, Lewisohn continues in the same strain by passing before the mental eye of Shylock, in his lonely home in the ghetto of Venice, on the night after his return from court, picture after picture of humiliation, persecution, and martyrdom of the Jew. Now it is his childhood memories of the day when the Jews were forced to forsake their homes in the principal thoroughfares of Venice and were huddled in the filthy, narrow ghetto. Then one after another, there pass other episodes of humiliation and persecution, among them the burning of the holy books of the Jews at Venice and of twenty-four Jewish martyrs at Ancona—the whole panorama of hate and cruelty which eloquently portrays the tragedy of the Jew in general. He then makes Shylock leave Venice after his forced conversion, settle in Turkey, and join in the activities of Don Joseph Nasi, the favorite of the Sultans, Suleiman and Selim, on behalf of his brethren. The novel concludes with a scene of the return of the prodigal Jessica after her abandonment by her Christian husband, Lorenzo, to her father and their reconciliation. On the whole, it is a skilful dramatization of historical events of the period, presenting vividly the deep shadows of the Jewish situation and also the few sparks of light which flashed through the darkness, the safe asylum

the Jews found at the time in the Turkish Empire, and the rise of some to prominence and power. The merit of the work consists primarily in the stirring description of events which is permeated by a spirit of deep sympathy and grief, and which makes the reader reflect upon the sad destiny of the people, called Jews.

We finally arrive at a really historical novel, one executed not only with skill and mastery but with a deep insight into the Jewish spirit of the ages. This is *The Festival at Meron* by Harry Sackler. The title does not tell the tale nor even offer us a glimpse into it, for the story is not of a festal nature, but contains deep tragedy, human struggle, and final victory of the spirit. The period it describes is that in which the final act of one of the most exalted dramas in human history, the long struggle of the Jews of Palestine for national freedom, the revolt of Bar Kokba took place, and the hero is Simeon bar Yoḥai.

Simeon bar Yoḥai, one of the five leading disciples of Akiba, occupies a singular place in the long row of Israel's great teachers during the century and a half following the destruction of the Temple who are known as *Tannaim*. He is simultaneously described in the Talmud, on the one hand, as a man who forsook the ways of the world and devoted himself only to Torah and piety, and on the other hand, as an inveterate enemy of the Romans who was sentenced to death by the reigning power for his public denunciation of the government and its ways. He lived as a recluse for thirteen years in a cave, and yet we find him later as an ambassador to Rome to plead with the Emperor for the rescinding of an edict of persecution against the Jews, which mission he carries out successfully with the aid of a friendly demon. He thus appears both as a man of action and as a saint and ascetic; as one who both despises and loves the world; one who flies from the company of men and yet loves them; an enemy of Rome, and yet his son, Eliezer, his companion in seclusion, becomes a Roman official, chief of police of a district in Palestine. And to cap all these contradictory traits in his character, he, the most logical interpreter of the law who always followed the rational explanation of Biblical views, became in Jewish lore, centuries after his death, the fountain-head of Jewish mysticism—the author of the *Zohar*. It is the many-sidedness of the man, the incongruities of his character, through all of which there shines its nobility, which attracted our author, and he undertook to interpret the life of this remarkable man in a story which in its gradual unfolding reconciles the opposite tendencies in the soul of Simeon.

What is more, it presents a vivid picture of a brief but heroic period in Jewish history together with the portrayal of the deeds of the moving spirits of those times, the great Akiba, the general Bar Kokba, and a number of other characters, including the Roman governor and his wife whose role in the story, though circumscribed, is yet of importance.

What is worth noting about this work is that this historical panorama with its many episodes is constructed of very meager material. There are no chronicles of this last rebellion of the Jews, no Josephus recorded it, nor any other historian. There are only stray references in the Talmud to events and persons and several legends. With remarkable dexterity and skill did our novelist utilize this sparse material to erect his fine edifice. Yoḥai, the father of Simeon, the rich merchant of Tiberias, the friend of the officials who knows his way in court, is only alluded to in the Talmud in less than half a line, as one friendly to the ruling power. Yet, it is on the basis of that single reference that Sackler drew such a fine portrait of him. He is indeed moderate in his attitude towards Rome, bows to necessity, disapproves of rebellion, and yet how much patriotism and loyalty the man displays when things take a different turn, and how much sagacity and worldly wisdom as well as broad humanism he evinces in the numerous roles assigned to him by the author. There is only a legendary remark that the wife of Tinius Rufus, the governor of Palestine, became the wife of Akiba, and the writer, though not following the legend to its conclusion, draws on its basis a charming picture of the noble Rufina and her efforts on behalf of Akiba, the master, under whose spiritual influence she fell, and also on behalf of the down-trodden Jews whom she not only pities but admires for their fortitude and purity of spirit. And his portrayals are true to history, for many were the Roman ladies who were proselytes at the time. Akiba, though of second place in the novel, yet appears in the story in all his glory in all roles: great as a patriot, who condones the actions of the rude Bar Kokba for the sake of Israel; great in his love of the poor and needy, for when the order is given by the general to expel all civilians from Bethar because of the scarcity of food he is willing to share their fate; great in his loyalty to Bar Kokba when he refuses to sanction the latter's offer to surrender his person to Severus in order to save the besieged; great in his devotion to teaching; and still greater in his martyr's death. All these scenes are drawn with a master's hand, with a spirit of love and piety as the life of Akiba should be presented, in the true Jewish spirit.

The greater part of the book is devoted to a delineation of the character of Simeon. He starts out as a rebel while yet a student, joining one of the groups of the "Iron Rod," a revolutionary organization, but on coming in closer contact with war and its horrors, his noble soul revolts at participating in such action. He is especially shocked at the treachery of Bar Kokba who promised Crispus, a Roman commander of a Galilean fortress, and his men safe conduct and then ordered his soldiers to attack the detachment. Even the influence of the master, Akiba, who reluctantly condones this act cannot restore Simeon's ardor for the liberation of his people by means of war. However, he cannot extricate himself from entanglement in the great drama enacted before his eyes and participates in all the vicissitudes of his nation, witnesses the war and its miserable failure, the fall of Bethar, the persecution of Hadrian, the death of his beloved master, Akiba, and finally the days of peace which come with the reign of Antoninus Pius. But through all these there is struggle in his heart. At one moment he longs to withdraw from the world, and longs even for a martyr's death, and at another, he is drawn back to life and to action on behalf of his unfortunate brethren. All his colleagues, the disciples of Akiba, submit to the inevitable, accept the rule of Rome, and some of them even admire its greatness and strength, but not Simeon. Deep in his heart he carries the dull pain at seeing the conquerors rule his country and people, and he nourishes the spark of wrath. When the smoldering spark bursts into flame in a short fiery speech against the oppressor, he pays dearly for the outburst. Sentenced to die, he flees and lives in isolation in a cave for twelve years. When he issues forth at the death of the governor and comes back in the world a new man, he is convinced that a martyr's death is not the way to serve God, but that the right path to Him is through struggle in order to live; and he quietly says to himself, "Oh Israel, it is not death but life that conquers all." At first, however, he finds it difficult to adjust himself to the world after the long isolation, and he goes back for a short time to his cave, but gradually the new thought grows into firm conviction that real service to fellowmen can be performed by being with them. He goes again into the world, and at the eve of his life performs the greatest service for his people by going to Rome and pleading the cause of his people before the philosopher king, Marcus Aurelius, and what is more, not disdaining to gain his point, according to legend, through the help of a friendly demon.

He is strengthened in his new belief and conviction of the value of service to men by the words of the philosopher-emperor who extols the sacredness of duty.

The author has done well by not attempting to rationalize the legends and by introducing the supernatural element in the form of the friendship between Simeon bar Yoḥai and the demon, Bar Talmaion. It adds special charm and helps him to achieve the unity and sequence by which the work is distinguished. In conclusion we may add that the fine portrait of Michal, the wife of Simeon, as the ideal Jewish woman, constitutes one of the merits of the story. The postscript describes briefly but enthusiastically the annual festival at Meron, a village in upper Galilee, where Simeon is buried, when the Kabbalists come thither to pay their respects to the reputed author of the *Zohar*, the fountain-head of Jewish mysticism, and hence the title. This novel is undoubtedly the best in Anglo-Jewish fiction produced in this country.

There were a number of writers who devoted themselves to the writing of children's stories. The most prominent among them are Alma Ehrlich Levinger and Ben Aronin.* Both draw upon history for their themes. Aronin's *The Lost Tribe*, is a book of adventure based upon the fantastic tale of Eldad the Danite who centuries ago claimed to have discovered the "lost tribes of Israel."

His second story, *The Moor's Gold*, deals with the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition and assumes the Jewish origin of Columbus. Both are written in vivid prose, and possess a poetic tinge.

133. ANGLO-JEWISH POETRY

Poetry did not fare as well as prose belles-lettres. The number of poetic productions which really deserve that name are few, and still fewer are the names of singers in American Israel who can claim to have expressed the spirit of the nation in their poems. The reasons for the paucity of the productivity in the field of poetry were indicated by us above.

The first blossoms of Jewish poetry in this country were the religious songs of Penina Moïse (1797-1880). Brought up in a small community in the South in a Portuguese Jewish environment which centered primarily around religion, but which possessed little of other features of Jewish life, she expressed her poetic emotion in religious songs. In her collection of these poems, *Hymns Written for the Use*

* Aronin is also the author of an epic in Hebrew entitled *THE ABRAMIAD* which is in process of publication.

of *Hebrew Congregations*, published in 1856, there is noted a genuine feeling and a craving for nearness to God, the God of Israel.

A dozen years later, a volume of poems was published by another Jewish poetess, Adah Isaacs Menken (1835-1868), who was withal a colorful personality. In her short life of thirty-three years, she succeeded in being married thrice, in distinguishing herself as an actress on the American stage, in traveling extensively in Europe, and in gaining the friendship of such illustrious poets and writers as Rosetti, Swinburne, Dickens, and Dumas. Yet, in spite of all these vicissitudes and contrary attractions and interests, she retained an intense feeling for her people, and her heart responded warmly to its woes and tragedies. In her small volume of poems, *Infelicia*, published posthumously, there are a number dedicated to the fate of her people which are permeated by a deep Jewish spirit and poetic insight. In general, all her poems are distinguished by a note of melancholy which is characterized as "my heritage" and in which an echo of Kohelet is heard. Another trait, which is probably also due to her heritage, are her vigorous protests against the hypocrisy in the world and the dominance of materialism which is expressed in her poem, *Souls for Sale*. Nor is the hope for the day, when struggle will disappear and the soul will come into its own, absent. Many poems display that strain. All these traits are greatly intensified in her distinctly Jewish songs. Strongly alive to the suffering of her people, she pleads passionately in her poem, *At Spes non Fracta* (But Hope is Not Yet Broken), for the coming of the Messiah, and longs for the return of Israel to his land, thus:

Will he never come, will Israel
In exile eternally pine,
By the idolators scorned, pitied by a few?
Will he never his vows to Jehovah renew,
Beneath his own olive and vine?

In another poem, *The Jew in Parliament*, the poetess, aroused by the debarment of Lionel de Rothschild from a seat in the House of Commons because he would not take the Christian oath, protests vigorously against the hypocrisy of the world. In the historical poem, *Judith*, she expresses a strong passion for revenge for all the wrongs done to Israel through the ages. She attains the heights of poetic feeling in her poem, *Hear, O Israel*, in which a note of repentance at

her forsaking the "Tents of Jacob," a call to her people for courage in its struggle for its religion and God, and hope for better days, are the leading motives of which she sings with love, pathos, and confidence, a genuine ring of a soul-stirring poem.

A dozen more years passed and there appeared on the scene another Jewish poetess, Emma Lazarus (1849-1887). She can be called the Jewish poetess par excellence of the nineteenth century. Her life was not stormy as that of Menken, but quiet and peaceful, and the poetic urge took hold of her early in life. At the age of twenty she had already made her mark in American poetic literature, and for a number of years she continued to give expression to her delicately-attuned soul filled with an all pervading sense of beauty in lyrical poems in which love of the beautiful and a note of melancholy intermingle. Aroused to a sense of Jewishness by the outbreaks against the Jews in the early eighties of the last century and coming in contact with the Jewish immigrants of East-European Jewry, she devoted her poetry during the last years of her life to her people.

She must have prepared herself for her new role, for her poems display not only feeling and emotion but also an insight that comes from knowledge. Her loving heart responded readily to the tragedy of Israel of which she sings with intense emotion, thus:

Each crime that wakes in man the beast
Is visited upon his kind,
The lust of mobs, the greed of priests,
The tyranny of kings combined.²

But she is not overwhelmed by this tragedy, great as it may be, for with true insight she senses that the "vale of tears" through which Israel passed and is passing has not broken his spirit and in confidence exclaims:

For naught has power to swerve the steadfast soul
Within that valley broken and made whole.³

Moreover, she comforts her people that, after all, this suffering was from choice, and in her poem she visions a soul which was given, in the realm of the spirit, the selection between two paths in life, one following the multitude which leads to glory, and the other pursuing

² Poems, Vol. II, p. 3.

³ Ibid., *The Valley of Baca*, p. 10.

truth which ends in bitter suffering. The spirit of Israel chose the latter. This thought which was expressed long ago by Judah ha-Levi in his *Kuzari* is clothed by our poetess in beautiful form and chiseled verse.

Of the hope of Zion which was aroused in the hearts of the Jews of Russia in those years only a faint echo reached Lazarus and she only alludes to it in some of her poems, yet she is full of hope for the Jew on her own accord and sings of it in glowing lines in *The Banner of Zion*.

Oh, deem not dear that martial fire,
Say not the mystic flame is spent,
With Moses' law and David's lyre.
Your ancient strength remains unbent,
Let but an Ezra rise anew
To lift the banner of the Jew.⁴

She reaches her height in the *New Ezekiel*, in which, like the prophet of old, she calls upon the spirit to revive the scattered bones and cause them to join into a living, vigorous body.

These thoughts and emotions are expressed in various phases in poems glorifying the Jewish holidays, especially Hanukkah which commemorates the victory of the Maccabees whose spirit she attempted to revive. She also made excellent use of legends and historical subjects and infused them with intense poetic spirit. In *Gifts* and *Birth of Man* she idealizes through legendary motives the passion of Israel for truth and its bitter consequences. Among her historical poems, the most powerful is *The Epistle*, based upon the content of a letter written by Joshua ha-Lorqui to his apostate teacher, Solomon ha-Levi, later known as Paul de Santa Maria. In her version, Lazarus displays not only mastery of poetic form but depth of thought. The former disciple, while still within the fold—he later became an apostate himself—doubts the sincerity of his master's conversion and speaks with bitter irony of his claim that Thomas Aquinas' reasoning convinced him of the necessary change, concluding:

Who'd gainsay
Authority so clearly stamped divine?
On this side, death and torture, flame and slaughter,
On that, a harmless wafer and clean water.⁵

⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

A fine defense of the Jewish position in the world is placed in the mouth of Rashi in the long narrative poem, *Rashi in Prague*, and a very pathetic portrayal of the martyrdom of a Jewish community during the Black Death Persecution in 1349 is given in the historical tragedy, *Dance to Death*. The poetess also executed a number of exquisite renditions of poems by Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Judah ha-Levi, and Moses Ibn Ezra, the Mediaeval bards, and of the Jewish songs of Heinrich Heine. The songs and poems of Emma Lazarus are a fine expression of the Jewish poetic genius and as such they should be cherished by the Jews of today as a gift of a beautiful and spirited soul of the former generation.

The next three decades were, on the whole, barren of Jewish poetry though great things were happening in Jewish life during that span of time. The gradual increase of the Jewish population in this country, the ramification of Jewish life, the deep suffering of the Jews abroad, the World War and its consequences, and the rebuilding of Palestine—all these did not find response in the hearts of poets of Jewish origin, and no expression was given to these events. Except for stray poems written by various writers in periodicals, there arose no Jewish bard in American Israel worthy of that name until the last decade when two singers made their appearance, a poetess and a lone poet.

The poetess is Jessie Sampter (d. 1939). She began to write early in this century, but her Muse grew wings only in the last decade and a half, and her only important collection of poems, *A Brand Plucked from the Fire*, was published in 1936. Like the sister poetesses preceding her, she is primarily lyrical, and the theme of her lyrics is not Israel and his suffering but the land of Israel and the national renaissance. She at last gave expression to the yearning of her people for Zion, as reflected in the toil of the *Haluzim* (Pioneers) and in the rebuilding of the ancient land. She spent her last years in Palestine, living the life of a pioneer. It is these songs in which her genius is best expressed, for her love of Palestine is deep and her feeling for the young builders of Palestine is not only genuine but fills her entire soul. In fact, she sees in this renaissance the new revelation of God to Israel, thus:

Not with a blast of trumpets as a fanfare of triumph
Not with the noise and shouting of strutting over a foe,
But I will come quietly, as a woman to her sick child
As the words of a friend, little by little.⁶

⁶ *Brand Plucked from the Fire*, p. 3.

And she undertook to be the prophetess of this new revelation but not with burning words and high-sounding phrases, but with miniature, exquisite pictures of the beauty of the land and the idealism of the pioneers. She sings and paints in words the colorful nature scenes of Palestine. Every phenomenon serves as a theme for a song; the appearance of spring in the highlands and lowlands, the rain, the flowers, moonlight, and sunshine, and even the very dust finds favor in her eyes, for,

Soon from the clouds will the drops be shaken
And all the white dust will then awaken
And burst into many-colored flowers
Under the fingers of the showers.⁷

Next to the land there is the love of the pioneers, men and women, whose hard toil and unflinching idealism overcame all difficulties and turned a desert into a flourishing garden. She sings in numerous poems of that idealism expressed in various phases and moods, and surrounds their lives with a halo of glory. Some of the little poems are very stirring in their simplicity, such as the call of the pioneer girl to the pioneer lad in *Idyll*:

Put flowers in my hair, lad;
And take my grateful hand
For we've only this to share, lad,
The love of our land.⁸

Another motive in the songs of this poetess is love, not physical but spiritual, the love of kindness and human goodness. It is this love which she glorifies and sings of, and in bestowing this love she sees the path to happiness, and says:

Give for the giving
Love for the loving
And you'll be in heaven
Without ever moving.⁹

There is also a religious strain in her poetry, and she struggles to express her pantheistic feeling, that God is present everywhere and in all human action in a few reflective poems which, though they do

⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

⁹ Ibid., p. 123.

not impress us by their depth, are permeated by an ethical sentiment issuing from a pure and loving heart.

The lone poet is Philip Raskin. He is a prolific singer for his Muse awakened early, and the number of his poems run into the hundreds. Several smaller collections of poems were published and issued at various times, and the final collection, in two volumes, entitled *Selected Poems*, was published in 1931. The range of his poetry is wide. He sings on nature, love, life, the destiny of his people, and the national renaissance.

However, like many other Jewish poets, he sings mainly of life, its sorrows, strivings, and hopes, and as in their songs, there is also in his a strong melancholy note. Raskin does not rise to great heights, but there is warmth and glow to his poems which touch a responsive chord in our hearts. He often bewails the flight of life, the passing of youth, and with genuine feeling sings of the memories of former days when the world looked bright and dreams were not disturbed by grim reality. At times, he expresses the human plaint at the burden of life with its sorrows, yet he loves life, and says:

I am thankful each white day
For every dewdrop, blade, and ray.¹⁰

Likewise, in spite of the evil deeds of man, he believes that essentially his soul longs for the good, for he judges other beings by himself, and he expresses this thought thus:

I know man's soul is made to show
To man his task
And if a man seems base, I know
He wears a mask.¹¹

His love poems are not permeated with a spirit of passion and strong emotion but possess qualities similar to the poems on life. As a rule, he sings more of the memories of love than of love itself, and he purges love of its physical passion emphasizing its spiritual and salutary influence on the soul. This invests his poems with a halo of romanticism and imparts to them a peculiar charm.

In Raskin's national poems, there is evident some influence of the contemporary great Hebrew poets, such as Bialik and others, and

¹⁰ *Selected Poems*, Vol. II, p. 121.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

also of S. Frug, but he displays a fine spirit of his own. The motives he employs are numerous; he sings of his nation's woes, of the spirit of the holidays, of Palestine and its pioneers, and is very successful in the choice of poetic themes from legends and historical episodes. His poem, *A Dead Assembly*, is quite stirring. In it he brings back in the stillness of the night into Madrid the numerous martyrs of the Inquisition who died for the sanctification of the name of God. They enact nightly the scene of their martyrdom, and curse those who in the name of God burned people for no other sin but their faithfulness to God.

He rises to poetic heights in his songs of Biblical themes, especially in *David's Harp* which is a panegyric on the Psalms. Taking the Talmudic legend that David's harp was stirred every midnight by the north wind, thus emitting wonderful tunes though untouched by human hands, as his starting point, he depicts in stately verse how this voice of God heard in the wind is echoed in the Psalms in its various phases. At times, it speaks of nature's fury, and at other times of the loneliness of the soul crying to its Maker, and then again of the exultation of the soul trusting in Him and praising his glory, and hence the appeal of the Psalms to all humanity. Nor does Raskin lack reflection and poetic irony, and his short poem, *Two Brothers*, displays it fully. The theme is the moment when Moses descends from Sinai with the tablets in his hands and sees Aaron and the people around the golden calf. He concludes the poem as follows:

And men have come, and men have gone
And skies have been clear and clouded,
But he on the hill still stands alone
While the valley of gold is crowded.¹²

Raskin's poetry is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the meager Jewish poetry in English produced in this country.

134. ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

Periodicals, as stated above, were an important factor in the development of Anglo-Jewish literature, and consequently, there were many essayists and critics. Few, however, attained distinction in this field. Of these, there are to be noted B. G. Richards, I. L. Brill, Louis Lipsky, and Maurice Samuel.

¹² Ibid., Vol. I, p. 31.

The first belongs to the earlier period of literary productivity. He contributed for a number of years to various Anglo-Jewish weeklies short essays on different topics. They were tinged with light humor and at the time exerted an influence on the readers. The second was an able journalist and had a facile pen. He edited several weeklies and for over two decades conducted the English page of the Yiddish daily, *Yiddisher Tageblatt*. His numerous editorials and essays written in a vigorous style dealt chiefly with the problems of the day.

Louis Lipsky, who is an outstanding Zionist leader in this country, also made his mark as a man of letters. For over three decades he contributed essays and critical reviews to various periodicals and also edited several Zionist publications, both monthlies and weeklies. His essays deal primarily with nationalistic and Zionist problems, and are distinguished by precision of style and logical presentation of arguments. Maurice Samuel is a many-sided writer and there is hardly a literary branch to which he did not contribute. He is an able publicist, a keen critic, an essayist, a translator of note, and has even tried his hand at novel writing. His many-sidedness, however, prevented him from attaining real eminence in one field, and as a result, his more important contribution to American-Jewish letters is his translations. His rendering of Bialik's poems, Flagg's Anthology, Ash's *The Nazarene*, and other works enriched Anglo-Jewish belles-lettres to a considerable degree.

CHAPTER XIV

YIDDISH LITERATURE

135. *GENERAL REMARKS*

The span of time during which Yiddish literature was produced in this country can be roughly divided into two periods of unequal length, the first, beginning with the early eighties and ending around 1905, and the second, from that date to the present day. The literatures produced during these periods differ both in quantity and quality; that of the first period excels in the former, while that of the second, in the latter.

Turning to the literature of the earlier period we can say that the large mass of fiction, poetry, and works dealing with various subjects was permeated, on the whole, with a didactic tendency, not unlike the one which prevailed in the European Haskalah literature, but with noted differences. The writers of the latter were cultural idealists who aimed to create new cultural values, while the moving spirits of the early American Yiddish literature were social and economic idealists, whose purpose was mainly to make the masses class conscious and prepare them for the economic struggle. Again, the writers of the Haskalah strove to raise the readers to their own level, while the early Yiddish authors, due to their utilitarian and propagandistic tendencies, adapted themselves to the literary taste of the masses and suited their productions to their conception. As a result, the entire literature of that period is distinguished by a certain grossness and is animated by the spirit of the market-place. There was no room for artistic expression and subjective creation as such products would have found little demand in those days.

Much of the character of that literature can be explained by the conditions of Jewish life in the late seventies and the early eighties of the last century which determined its origin and influenced its development. Yiddish literature originated in journalism, and its growth was fostered to a large degree by socialistic propaganda and

the rising class struggle. As early as 1870, attempts were made by energetic spirits to publish at intervals two Yiddish weeklies which were of short duration. In 1871 K. Sarasohn made a new attempt to issue the *Yiddishe Wochenblatt* (Yiddish Weekly), which, after a period of five months, likewise ended in failure. The undaunted publisher, though, renewed his efforts in 1874 and began issuing his weekly, *Yiddishe Gazetten*, and this time he was successful, for the publication was continued until 1928 in spite of great obstacles and competition in the early years of its appearance. Encouraged by the arrival of large masses of East-European Jews in the early eighties, this energetic publisher made two attempts in 1881 and 1883 to turn his *Gazetten* into a daily, but with little success. Not until 1885 did he carry out his cherished plan to establish a Yiddish daily. In that year, the *Tageblatt* began to appear and continued along with the weekly *Gazetten* to the above year.

Sarasohn belonged to the conservative or orthodox wing of American Jewry, and his journals reflected the spirit of that wing, though in a much diluted form, adapting his publications to the tastes of his readers, many of whom had emancipated themselves from rigorous Jewish traditions. These as well as several other publications, which began to appear in the large cities outside New York, such as *Iddisher Courier* in Chicago (1887), reflected more the views of the Jewish middle class than that of the religious tendency of Orthodoxy.

However, though this type of publications was first in the field, it was not the one which gave an impetus to the development of Yiddish literature, for the main purpose of the publishers was to supply information to the readers, as well as light literature to while away the leisure hours, and it is primarily in the direction of developing the type of fiction which fed the phantasy and the romantic inclination of the masses that its influence was felt. The real impetus for the growth of a Yiddish literature came from other periodicals which were permeated by a radical tendency and directed by people of a different stamp.

The mass migration of the eighties brought to this country a large number of Jewish workingmen who hailed from the smaller towns of Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and an equally large number of Jews consisting of former small merchants and petty traders, or men without any definite occupation, on the other hand. These immigrants turned, as stated above, mostly to the needle trade and partly to the

cigar and cigarette manufacture which was then in the hands of a number of Jews of the upper stratum, earlier settlers in the country, or to peddling. Thus, within a short time there arose a large Jewish proletariat which struggled hard for a living. There was then a potential ground for the emergence of a class struggle. The potentiality soon became an actuality. Along with the mass of immigrants of limited education and culture whose only medium of expression was Yiddish, there came a number of Russian Jewish intellectuals who, as a rule, were radical and were permeated with the socialist spirit and the ideals prevalent among certain circles of Jewish youth in that country. These intellectuals saw in the condition of the Jewish masses a fertile field for the realization of their cherished ideals and the creation of a Jewish socialist movement, and they soon became their leaders. And though they were, on the whole, imbued with the cosmopolitan spirit of the movement of those days, and were mostly antagonistic to any Jewish distinctiveness, whether religious, nationalistic, or even linguistic, yet they had perforce to use Yiddish as the medium of expression and propaganda since this was the only language the masses understood. They then set out to create a literature in that language which, though its main purpose was to propagate the socialistic ideal, had to include other elements of an emotional nature, such as fiction, poetry, and publicistic articles of a polemic and didactic nature.

This trend of early Yiddish literature also had its origin in journalism. After sporadic attempts at publishing propagandistic brochures and pamphlets, the intellectuals turned to issuing weeklies in Yiddish. The years between 1886 and 1889 saw a number of such weeklies rise and fall, and finally in the latter year two were established, the *Arbeiter Zeitung* (Workingmen's Newspaper) and *Die Freie Arbeiter Stimme* (The Free Voice of the Workingmen), which endured for a time. The first was a socialistic periodical and existed for a half dozen years; the second, of anarchistic tendency, is still appearing. In the early nineties, with the spread of the socialist movement among the laboring Jewish masses, the leaders succeeded in establishing a daily, *The Abendblatt*, and finally in 1897 *Der Forverts* began to appear which henceforth became the leading organ of the laboring masses.

It is these periodicals which were for two decades the source of Yiddish literature of the period. Most of the works of fiction and poetry were first published in these periodicals, and only later collected

separately. Likewise, many articles of a polemic nature, combating religion, tradition, and bourgeois ideology and morality, as well as essays on popular science, sociology, and economics were written originally for these periodicals and later issued in books.

The origin of these various types of literature influenced to a marked degree the style and content. Writing for the daily reader, the writers, even the more able among them, had to adapt themselves to his taste, both in style and presentation. They vied with each other in captivating his fancy. Consequently, exaggeration, lurid colors and excessive emotionalism abound, for along with the literary food served them in the party periodicals the masses craved for exciting matter which was supplied them in the form of lengthy fantastic novels. Thus a literature of a peculiar stamp grew up. We will now turn to a brief survey of its various expressions.

136. *EARLY FICTION*

The fiction of the first period of Yiddish literature bore the stamp of the general spirit. In fact, it was a means for inculcating the socialist world view in the hearts of the masses, and consequently every story and sketch had as its main motive either the portrayal of the suffering proletariat at the hands of the exploiters, or the greed of the capitalists, or even the popularization of the socialistic ideals. Typical of the fiction, employing the last motive is the "novel," *Raphael Naariẕko*, by Abraham Cahan which enjoyed great popularity at the time and went through four editions. The principal character, Raphael, a carpenter, who in his home town enjoyed prosperity because of his craftsmanship, is entirely lost on his arrival in this country. He becomes a mere cog in an immense industrial wheel and suffers along with others from exploitation. He begins to reflect on his own position as a factory worker, and by a slow process he comes to recognize that the socialist ideal offers the only solution to all evils, and he becomes an ardent member of the movement. The greater part of the story is devoted to a popular presentation of socialism.

There were also other tendencies prevalent in the fiction of the day, all of which aimed to widen the horizon of life of the masses, to detach them from devotion to religion and tradition, and above all, to encourage the free play of emotions. The last found ready response in the hearts of the younger generation, and accordingly, love, not only in its

ideal aspect, but also in its grosser, passionate phases, was a favorite theme with fiction writers. In general, naturalism and realism predominated in Yiddish belles-lettres of that time.

Many were the writers who tried their hand at story writing, for little art was required, and mere skill sufficed. The most distinguished of these early fiction writers who deserve to be noted are I. Hurwitz, better known under his pseudonym, Z. Libin, and Leon Kobrin. Both began their literary careers in the early nineties, and though they are still continuing their work, their glory and popularity is long gone, and they belong primarily to the first period.

Libin devoted himself mainly to the sketch and the short story and is the proletarian fiction writer par excellence. He dedicated his pen, as he says himself, to the service of the socialist ideal and his sketches which number in the hundreds are illustrations of the need for carrying on the class struggle. They deal mainly with scenes of poverty, the miserable conditions in the sweatshop, the tragedies in the homes of the laborers and peddlers as a result of their poverty, and similar themes. However, he is not unaware of the comic aspect and humor in life, and a number of his sketches are of such content. He is not without talent, and possesses power of observation of life and also narrative skill, but little depth. On the whole, he is more of a pen photographer of events and situations than a real writer of stories and a delineator of characters. Some of the sketches are stirring, such as the one in which he describes a half-blind motorman running over his own child, or the one in which he portrays the scenes when the discharged laborers of a cigarette factory break forth in song when the machines, which take their place, are installed, in order to rob the owner of the joy of seeing them despondent, and similar incidents.

Kobrin is of a different type. He is not a mere writer of sketches, but attempted also longer stories and even several novels. His stories have plot and at times analysis and development of character. Socialism and class struggle form a motive in his stories but not the main motive, for his themes are more diversified. His tendency was to advocate a freer play of emotions, and hence love occupies an important place in his stories. Many of them deal with its various manifestations, and at times in its graver aspect. The frequent illicit affairs, which took place in those times in the crowded tenement houses, find more than a proportionate place in his stories. Some of these stories are well constructed and have an artistic ring. To his credit it must be

said that he felt the narrowness of this proletarian ideology, and from time to time attempted to extricate himself from its meshes, and in such moments he took as themes for his stories episodes from Jewish life in the East-European countries and he carried out these endeavors with an amount of success. His longer story, *Yankel Boile*, in which the principal character, Yankel, who grew up in a village among the peasants, and on becoming entangled in a love affair with a peasant girl, commits suicide rather than marry his paramour, is an attempt at psychological penetration in the soul of the Jew of the lowest stratum. He was also one of the few intellectual leaders who began to feel that their efforts to repress the Jewishness in the hearts of the masses, and to glorify the universally human emotions, only lead to emptiness in Jewish life. He gave expression to this feeling in several sketches, in one where a class-conscious working girl complains of the loss of the charm and joy of the Jewish holidays and of the emptiness pervading the life of the radicals. As early as 1897, he indited indirectly an accusation against his colleagues for their approach to life in his monologue, *Wos Is Er* (What Is He), in which he portrays briefly the precarious position of his young son who is neither Jew nor Christian, for he is robbed both of the joy of Passover and of Christmas.

Such expressions mark the turning point in proletarian fiction and point to a change which was bound to come. Kobrin's stories, though, are still overwhelmingly permeated by the spirit of the early fiction, yet at times bear a trait of transitional fiction.

The type of fiction described was the prevalent one, inasmuch as it reflected the views and ideas of the larger part of both the writers and the readers of Yiddish. But there was also another type, not marked by any particular tendency, produced by writers who executed their task with more or less skill. This type which satisfied the need of the Yiddish speaking middle class, or even the workingmen who were more conservative and not class conscious, was more Jewish in spirit, less realistic and naturalistic, and often also had a romantic note. Artistically it was not much higher than the class fiction, for the taste of the readers of this type of literature differed little from that of the devotees of the radical literature, and the writers had to adapt themselves to it. Like the former, this type also consisted primarily of short stories and sketches, since it was also inspired by and published primarily in newspapers and periodicals.

The representatives of this type of fiction and the most talented

of its writers was I. S. Zevin (d. 1925), better known under his pen-name, Tashrak. His fort  is the sketch in which a single episode of life is portrayed. His sketches, though, are not isolated but connected in a series, and when the series is completed we see in it a full reflection of an important phase of Jewish life. For that purpose he chose for his series a central character which, as a rule, is not an individual but a type and grouped all other characters around him. His best series is the one called *Hayyim der Kostomer Peddler* (Hayyim the Installment Dealer). In that series the life of the middle class of the immigrant Jew in their process of Americanization and adjustment to their new environment is reflected in its numerous aspects. Selling merchandise on installment in the homes, or "custom peddling" as it was called, was an important occupation of many Jews who belonged to the middle class in the two decades from 1890 to 1910, and it was also lucrative and many who plied the trade became prosperous. Hayyim, too, gradually emerges from poverty to moderate wealth. And in the vicissitudes of his life the writer draws a picture of the changes in the life of a large section of Jews on their way to prosperity. Hayyim, along with many others of his kind, moves out of the New York ghetto to a Brooklyn suburb which is still in a primitive condition and which the writer names *Blote Town* (Swamp Town), which the new settlers proceed to turn into a flourishing community. We hear in this series the echo of all the changes in Jewish life, economic, social, and spiritual. The feverish speculation in real estate, the building boom, the adoption of the American mode of social life and the aspiration to social prestige, the gradual change of religious worship from the older orthodox form to the Americanized conservative type, the emergence of the new type of Rabbi, the English speaking preacher, the entry of the Jew into politics—all find their place there and are delineated with skill and spiced with a healthy good-natured humor. Nor are other problems of the life of the middle class omitted, such as finding suitable husbands for the daughters, and the widening gap between the parents and the children, and finding professions or occupations for their sons. These are also touched upon in their grave and at times ludicrous aspects. Zevin wrote also other series of sketches and a novel, but none of the other works can compare in value to the series in which Hayyim holds the central place, as it gives a complete picture of a cross-section of Jewish life in this country during the formative period and thus possesses permanent value.

However, these types of fiction which consisted mainly of short stories were, for a time, eclipsed by an entirely different type which consisted of long novels containing fantastic plots and sensational characters. Its chief purpose was to provide amusement for the masses in their leisure time. This type was not new in Yiddish literature. We noted its appearance and development in European literature (Sec. 63). With the arrival of large masses of immigrants, it was transported to this country along with some of its producers, such as the notable Shomer (Sec. 63) who arrived in 1889. Here it found fruitful soil, for the fiction of the periodicals could not satisfy the craving of the masses for emotional excitement, and they demanded stronger means. The demand created an abundant supply. Energetic publishers began to issue long novels in numerous installments called *Heften* (Parts), each *Heft* consisting of sixteen or thirty-two pages which sold for a few pennies. The number of such *Heften* in a novel at times ran into the hundreds. Shomer plied his trade here and produced a few of such novels, but he found strong competition. Other writers tried their hand at this work and excelled him in the length of the novels and even in the complexity of the plot and its sensational character.

The content of these novels was of various natures; some of them, especially those of A. Tannenbaum (1848-1913), the most prolific and most popular of the novelists, were of a pseudo-historical or pseudo-informative character in imitation of Jules Verne. Others dealt with intrigues and machinations in courts, in diplomatic circles, in the life of princes and nobles, or on the other hand, in the sphere of the demi-monde. The characters hailed from all classes, from the upper stratum of society to the lowest. At times, the theme was a number of complicated episodes of Jewish life which the writers put together in an artificial form. Many of the novels were direct translations from works in European literatures but were adapted to the taste of the readers. The main purpose was to hold the attention of the reader, to excite his emotions, and to surprise him by the unexpected endings. As a rule, justice was meted out; the villain was punished and the righteous were rewarded, the lovers were united and the poor became rich.

The very titles of some of the works, such as *The Mysteries of the Russian Court*, *The Mysteries of the Jesuits*, *The Gold Mines of California*, and similar ones reveal the character of the content. The style of these novels is likewise suited to the taste of the readers; it is euphuistic, replete with high-sounding phrases and quasi-poetic expressions,

which aim to put the reader in a romantic mood and arouse his emotions. There is no lack, though, of naturalistic and erotic passages inserted by the writers as a device for interesting the reader.

Of the authors of such novels, besides Shomer and A. Tannenbaum, there are to be mentioned M. Bukanski, M. Seifert, G. Selikowitz, A. Harkavy—who later distinguished himself as lexicographer and Yiddish philologist—and also the Hebrew poets, I. Rabinowitz and M. M. Dolitzki (Sec. 27). The production of these novels lasted for a decade, up to the turn of the century. At that time the Yiddish dailies and weeklies began to publish long serials of similar character, and besides, the taste of the readers began to change for the better and as a result the publication of the *Heften* ceased and the manufacture of these types of novels slackened generally. They, however, still persist in Yiddish belles-lettres and the serials printed in the dailies are later published separately and find purchasers, but their influence is greatly curtailed.

137. EARLY YIDDISH POETRY

The early poetic expression in Yiddish in this country was, like fiction, placed in the service of the socialistic ideal. It was thought by the moving spirits of the movement even a better means for arousing the laboring masses to class consciousness than stories and sketches, since it carried, on account of its form, a strong emotional appeal. Consequently, there appeared numerous would-be poets who published in the radical periodicals their poetic productions. These proletarian bards sang of the poverty and misery of the workingmen, portrayed in dark colors and in rhymed verses the agonies of the sweatshop, called upon the masses to liberate themselves from their oppressors, the capitalists, glorified the socialist ideal, and hailed the impending day of redemption—that of the social revolution. Such were the motives of that poetry; nature, love, lyrical expression of the soul of the singer, the Jewish tragedy, these had, on the whole, little place in the poetry of the day.

The leading bards of the eighties and the nineties of the last century were, besides Morris Winchewski who made his reputation as a proletarian poet while yet in England, David Edelstadt (1866-1892), Joseph Bowshover (1872-1915), and Morris Rosenfeld (1862-1923). The first two were primarily devotees of the proletarian Muse, while the third was saved from that fate by his real poetic genius.

Edelstadt, the pioneer of American Yiddish poetry, is in reality more

propagandist than poet. He has no ear and no eye for any phenomenon in the world and life except the woe of the workingmen, the tyranny of the exploiters, and the vision of the great day when the social revolution will come. His meager collection contains no poems on other themes but these, except for a few flat satires against religion. On the whole, there is little art in his poetry, either in content or form. It is stamped with the impress of propaganda; his colors are lurid, and his protests against the oppressors loud and jarring, for they often turn into mere curses. The best that can be said of him is that he was sincere in his idealism, as evidenced in his poem, *Mein Zawoeh* (My Testament), in which he asks his comrades to wrap him, when dead, in the red flag and sing the song of freedom and revolution at his burial.

Bowshover was of a higher calibre; he was both better educated and somewhat closer to Jewishness, and above all, possessed a poetic spark. It was his misfortune to fall, when quite young, under the influence of the proletarian bards and he began to imitate them, especially Edelstadt. For a time he sang on the same themes, but in a more poetic tone and in a richer, more colorful style, for he mastered Yiddish more dexterously than Edelstadt. Later, due to his assiduous reading of the great poets of world literature, he attempted to liberate his poetic genius from the bonds of radicalism and give it free rein. He then indited from time to time a nature poem and others which have an appealing note. Unfortunately, he did not succeed in raising his incipient poetic spirit to greater heights, for soon a cloud settled on his mind, and after a few years its light was entirely extinguished. He spent the last fifteen years of his life in an insane asylum.

138. MORRIS ROSENFELD

Morris Rosenfeld is not only the most distinguished of the poets of that period, but he also gave an impetus to Yiddish poetry in general. It was through his influence that it was ultimately liberated from its propagandistic tendency and entered into the service of the Jewish people rather than that of the socialist idea. Endowed with poetic spirit, he began to write early in life, even before he had any conception of poetic forms and technique, and sang whenever he was moved to express his emotions.

As such he could not, like his colleagues, be addicted to one idea and to the narrow view which saw in the world only the woe of the workingman and his impending liberation. He observed many more things.

He also saw the beauty of nature, felt the thrill of love, and his heart was stirred by the suffering of his people.

He began, on coming to this country in 1887 and while working in a sweatshop for a number of years, with the social poem, and sang of the misery and suffering of the workingmen, and at times glorified the revolution and the day of freedom. But even these poems bear a different strain, that of genuine poetry. Such poems as *Zu A Borweser Meidele* (To A Barefoot Girl) and *Bei Die Hurwes Fun Delancy Street* (On the Ruins of Delancy Street) move us to the very depths of our soul. In the first, the full tragedy of blighted childhood is revealed to us in a few stanzas. In the second, the poet standing at the ruins of buildings which formerly housed many sweatshops and which were now razed in order to make room for a new bridge, recalls scenes of former days when youth found slow death in the shops which were without air or light and old age was bent under the heavy press iron, and death made an end to it all.

Many are the poems in which the singer expresses his deep sorrow and the agony of his soul at the suffering of his fellow workingmen in numerous ways and in various motives and portrayals. But the acme of this type of poetry is the long poem, *Die Sweat Shop*. In this the bard delineates in numerous stanzas the slow decay of his soul, its gradual mechanization into a small wheel in an enormous machine. The whirring of the machines, the constant tumult around him, the rush of the workers to sew more and still more garments, rob him gradually of human feeling and thought. Even the ticking of the clock in the shop seems to say to him, "work, work." Only at lunch time, when the noise is stilled, his soul awakens and he begins to rebel against his fate. At that time, the clock speaks to him of revolt and of time passed in misery and slavery. But then the whistle blows, and the machines begin to whirl, and once more he relapses into the mechanical cog, a human cog in the revolving wheel of the factory.

Unlike the other poets of his time, Rosenfeld, never forgot the suffering of his people, the love for whom always glowed in his heart, as he says in his poem, *Der Eibiger Funk* (The Eternal Spark),

This spark glows in my soul
From days of childhood.
Though it may at times
Grow small and cool,
Yet it glows and glows.

And when the poet saw his people attacked by enemies and felt the agony of his brethren, the spark turned into a flame and he sang his national songs. At times, as in *Der Iddisher Pinkos, In Goles, Der Goles*, and numerous other poems, he gives voice to Jewish suffering, to the tragedy of wandering. In others, especially the holiday poems, he glorifies the past of his people, and sings as in *Das Hanukkah Lichtel* of the indomitable power of the small flame which mighty storms could not put out, and which will continue to shed its modest glow while numerous bright lights shall have been extinguished. At still other times, he sings of the heritage of the Jew, the Bible, which the eternal wanderer carries in his bag and which supplies him with riches far more precious than treasures of gold and silver.

His national poetry rose to great heights in the two poems, *Der Iddisher Mai* (The Jewish May) and *Oifen Busem Fun Yam* (On the Bosom of the Sea). In the first, the tragedy of the Jew, his glorious past and the vision of a brighter future are all presented in a series of stirring stanzas. It begins with a poetic description of the charms and beauties of nature in the month of May. In contrast to this picture, the poet presents another one, that of a man bent by sorrow, wandering aimlessly in the midst of cheerful nature. This man—the Jew—seems to wander in a strange world. All is strange to him. Not for him do the flowers bloom, not for him do the birds twitter, nor the sun shine. This is followed by a third picture. In the midst of his wandering, the Jew raises his eyes and his face lights up, for he dreams of his past in his own land, the glories of which the poet portrays. He concludes with words of comfort to the wanderer, telling him that all is not lost and that the future holds better days in store for him.

In the second, the tragedy of Jewish migration is revealed to us in its depth through the powerful portrayal of a single episode. The scene is a ship tossed and buffeted by a storm at sea. The wind howls, the waves rise, the boat trembles, and its rafters creak. The passengers in agony wring their hands and pray to God. But in the midst of this outburst of human passions and sorrow two men sit calmly and stare at the raging sea. "Who are you, unfortunates?" they are asked. "Have you not mothers, children, relatives at home, a God?" They then unroll a tale of woe which stirs our soul. They had loving parents, a home and a land—but all was destroyed by the rude hands of a howling mob. And when they took the wander staff to come to the land of freedom, alas, even this land closed its gates. Then

Let the storm rage, let it howl,
 Let the deep seethe, rise and rave;
 For we are lost, wandering Jews,
 The fathomless sea alone can quench the burning pain.

Thus did the poet through this single poem express the entire tragedy of the Jew which unfortunately is revealed to us in our days in numerous episodes in the wandering of the refugees from Central Europe.

Our bard also felt the beauties of nature and wrote many poems in which he sings of its charms in various seasons as well as of the light of the changing scenes of day and night. He also indited lyrical poems in which he expresses his moods at different moments in life. Of these poems there are to be noted several which he wrote at the death of his only son of which *Alle Schweigen* (All Are Silent) is distinguished by its universal note. The poet turns to the elements of nature, the waves of the sea, the wind, and the stars, and asks them whether they saw somewhere in the universe a young angel, a spirit wandering and seeking his loving father. But all are silent.

However, the strength of Rosenfeld does not lie in his nature and lyrical songs, but in his social and national poems. Still, the variety of themes, his response to the world and changing phases in life contributed much to the widening of the horizon of Yiddish poetry. The great service of Rosenfeld, besides his own valuable poetic contribution, is that he imbued Yiddish poetry with the spirit of Jewishness and turned it to the source from which every expression of the Jewish genius always drew inspiration and strength.

139. THE SECOND PERIOD OF AMERICAN YIDDISH LITERATURE

With the turn of the century a change began to be evident in the life of the Jewish masses. The sweatshops began gradually to disappear and the economic situation of the workingmen to improve. Poverty was not as hideous; many from the laboring ranks, and even some of the leaders of the movement turned to other occupations and became wealthy, and in general adjusted themselves to American conditions, including adaptation to an American mode of life and manners. All this cooled to a large degree the ardor of the followers of the socialist movement and propaganda on its behalf was carried on at a much slower tempo. Both the intellectuals, the leaders of the workers, and the masses themselves began to see that there is much more to life and

letters than mere class struggle, and consequently there arose a demand on the part of many that Yiddish literature widen its bounds and that it become both many-sided and more Jewish in tone and character.

The demand for Jewishness was due to two factors; first to the fact that the line between the proletarian and the middle class was gradually being effaced. Many of the former passed over into the latter, and others, though they still remained workingmen, likewise, by force of circumstances, became more conservative in their views and conduct, and as a result, attachment to Jewish tradition inculcated in them in their youth began to reassert itself. The second factor was the influence which the new type of immigrants, who began to arrive in large masses in the years between 1905-1912, exerted upon American Jewish life. These new arrivals were different in character than their predecessors. On the whole, they were more educated, had among them a larger number of intellectuals, and above all, were imbued in various degrees with the spirit of Jewish nationalism which made itself strongly felt in the East-European Jewish life during the first decade of the present century. Even the radicals among them, with the exception of a small minority, were not averse to some form of Jewish nationalism and Jewish consciousness and effected a conciliation between these and the socialism they expounded. They constituted a new type of readers who demanded diversification and manifestation of the Jewish spirit and tradition in literature.

However, the most important factor in the change of the character of Jewish literary production is the rise of a new type of writers. The last wave of immigration brought to this country a considerable number of writers who had already made their reputation in East-European countries, and who had definite literary views and tendencies. These, preceded by their reputation, gradually overshadowed the earlier writers and became the masters in the field. To these literati, Yiddish writing was no means of propaganda but an aim in itself. Most of them were followers of that type of Diaspora nationalism (Sec. 119) which aims to create in Yiddish a literature and a secular culture to take the place of older religious and traditional values, and accordingly set out to do so.

They were greatly aided in the carrying out of their task by several circumstances closely allied to each other. The first is the change of the type of readers of Yiddish in general. The gradual Americanization of the Jewish masses, the rise of a young generation, and the

stopping of immigration decreased the number of readers to whom this language was the only literary medium. The type of readers was thus more and more limited to those to whom this language is an expression of Jewishness and its cultivation a duty. The second factor is the gradual penetration of the spirit of nationalism into the ranks of the Jewish workingmen and the various attempts at its reconciliation with the socialistic ideals. The large Jewish labor organizations were thus compelled to widen the bounds of their cultural activity and include in it some Jewish educational work. At the demand of some of the leaders and many of the members, they established schools in which secular Jewish education is imparted in Yiddish and all efforts are made to raise a generation to whom the literature in that language should constitute a cultural need. There is undoubtedly much artificiality in all these efforts, but they encouraged the writers in their purpose.

From all that was said, it can be inferred that the Yiddish literature of the second period, approximately from 1905 to the present day, strove to become more Jewish, more aesthetical, and endeavored to create cultural values. As a result, its expression became more ramified and diversified, and drew its inspiration not only from Jewish life of the present, but to a great extent from the cultural heritage of the people.

140. *THE FICTION OF THE SECOND PERIOD*

The fiction of the second period is distinguished both by its quantity and quality. The fact that expression in Yiddish became a spiritual need for a number of people with literary aspirations increased the productivity greatly. Many young people believed themselves able to enrich Jewish culture and tried their hand at writing sketches, short stories, and even novels, and as a result there was produced a supply of prose belles-lettres much in excess of the demand. The quantity contributed to the improvement of the quality, first, because among many literary aspirants, a number of real talents were found; second, the motive which inspired many of these writers was primarily the desire for aesthetical expression, and consequently, art became a leading factor in belles-lettres and its creators sought to endow their production with its quality, though they were not always successful.

Of the numerous fiction writers of both short stories and novels, the outstanding are Joseph Opatowsky or Apotashu (1886), David Pinski

(1873), A. Raboy (1885), and David Ignatow (1885). And to these we will turn for a characterization of the fiction of the time.

i. The first, who is the most prolific Yiddish fiction writer in this country, wrote a considerable number of short stories and four or five novels, but he excels primarily in the former. His novels are in reality a collection of short stories loosely connected by artificial means. His entire literary productivity bears the stamp of influence of two great Yiddish writers who preceded him, I. L. Perez and Shalom Ash, and it is in the light of this influence and conscious or unconscious imitation that his work can be best evaluated. The influence of Ash predominates the earlier works of Apotashu, while that of Perez the later.

In the earlier period of his activity, our writer, following Ash, who depicted in a number of short and long stories the rougher and grosser phase of Polish Jewish life, turned to a portrayal of a similar aspect of Jewish life in this country—the Jewish underworld in the New York ghetto. In the thirty or forty years which have passed since the first wave of East-European immigration reached this country until the time Apotashu began to write, Jewish life made many adjustments to the new environment, and not all of them for the better. The darker side of American life in the large cities, such as gangdom and organized criminal activity began to be reflected, though in a much lesser degree, also in the ghetto. In various corners of the ghetto, due to poverty and its consequences, there arose groups of young men and young women who imitated that phase of life. And to this phase Apotashu undertook to give expression. In a number of stories, he pictures this life in its many nuances in its full nakedness. He is a good observer and possesses great skill in description, which he utilizes to its fullest extent. This world pictured by our writer is dominated primarily by instinct and natural impulse; the characters are entirely emancipated from tradition and ideals, and are moved mainly by the desire to live and possess. Of all the motives, that of the erotic is the strongest. In general, our writer has a predilection for eroticism which constitutes a fundamental trait in his entire literary productivity.

The author is similarly free from ideals or psychological notions. He does not attempt to delve into the personalities of his characters and discover the causes for their actions, or to depict any conflict of emotions, but devotes himself primarily to portrayal and description of action in which he is master. He seems to enjoy the delineation of

expression of brutality, such as fights and scenes of passion. He possesses, however, a talent for narration and inventiveness, and his stories possess interest because they reveal a hidden corner of Jewish life though they repel us by their stark naturalism. In that period he also wrote a novel entitled *Hebrew*, in which the life of the Hebrew teachers in the ghetto is portrayed. It was again the discovery of a new corner in Jewish life, for the Hebrew teachers as a group formed, on the whole, an anomaly. The greater number of that group, consisting of young men and young women who were radically inclined and held untraditional views of life, were forced to occupy themselves with a profession which was religious in nature, and which was distasteful to them. Moreover, it also circumscribed their conduct and compelled them to conform to a certain pattern, at least externally, against which they rebelled. These circumstances gave to their life a certain complexity and created conflicts. Apotashu, who was himself a Hebrew teacher in New York Hebrew schools for a number of years, knew that life well and portrayed it skilfully in its several phases.

These attempts to give expression to phases of Jewish life hitherto untouched by earlier writers who concentrated primarily on the shop and its workers, widened the horizon of Yiddish fiction and gave an impetus to other writers to follow untrodden paths. However, even the field chosen by Apotashu proved itself too narrow for it was soon exhausted, and he, like many other writers, crossed the sea and went back to Poland in search of themes and motives for his stories. The atmosphere of Polish Jewish life was well known to our writer, for he spent his youth in Poland and he succeeded to a very large degree in giving expression to it.

In *Die Poilishe Welder* (In the Polish Forests), his chief belletristic work of the second period of his literary activity, he attempts to portray a section of Jewish life during the second half of the nineteenth century, saturated with piety and the spirit of Hassidism, but also tinged with outbursts of eroticism and passion. Under the influence of Perez who made Hassidism popular in Jewish fiction, our author, too, makes Hassidic life an important element in his novel, but unlike him, it is not the reflective phase of Hassidism which is emphasized but the emotional and that in its grosser type. In general, Apotashu projects in his several novels written during his later period characters of a peculiar type in whom eroticism and religious piety continually struggle for mastery. Such is his leading character, Mordecai Schreiber, in *Die*

Poilishe Welder. He spent his youth in the forests around Lipowitz where his family lived for generations. His ancestors, including his father, were well-to-do businessmen who had little learning but were very pious, generous, and respected visitors in the court of the *Zaddik* of Kotzk, but with all this, they often succumbed to the call of animal instincts which was in consonance with the semi-primitive life of the peasants and fishermen, the inhabitants of the forest district. They struggled against it, often yielded to passion and then did penance and fell into a religious mood. Mordecai inherited all these traits, and the struggle between these two elements in his soul as reflected in his life is the theme of the story. The first part deals with his youth in the forests. Even at that time his life sways between two emotions, the religious and the erotic, and he succeeds in entangling himself during his adolescence in several escapades. His father then sends him to the *Zaddik's* court in Kotzk to be trained there, and his life in that city is the subject of the second part. Kotzk at the time is itself a center of spiritual confusion. The *Zaddik*, Mendele, an exotic character in Hassidic lore, torn by grave doubts and heretical thoughts, is about to repudiate Hassidism. In order to avoid scandal, his family forces him into seclusion and spreads the rumor that he is sick. The sons of the *Zaddik*, and especially the daughters-in-law, though outwardly pious, are not averse to eroticism. The Hassidim are divided; most of them are loyal to the *Zaddik*, but some rebel and protest against such conduct and spread ugly rumors about life at court. It is in an atmosphere such as this that Mordecai lives and is entangled again and again in love affairs, swaying between passion and religion. In the third part, entitled Mordecai, a motley of events occur in the youth's life; he is inveigled in the uprising of the Polish peasants against the nobles and in the rebellion against the Czarist regime and participates in numerous attacks of the peasants upon the estates of the nobles, for he acts on the impulse of the moment and out of a sense of sympathy. He ultimately returns to Kotzk where he witnesses the funeral of the *Zaddik* and is greatly moved by the ceremony, but immediately after he has a rendezvous with one of his paramours, and thus the novel ends abruptly.

There are a multitude of scenes of Hassidic life in the story, each of which is masterfully drawn. There are also other episodes well depicted, especially of the life of the Schreiber family in the forests. But the story as a whole lacks both unity and purpose. Many events

and scenes are introduced artificially. The author, whether for purposes of effect or just to prolong the narrative, introduces the stories of Berek Yoselewich, the Jewish colonel, who fought for the freedom of Poland, and also depicts certain scenes which take place in the court at Kotzk which reminds one of the Frankist celebrations in which moral laxity and a pseudo-mystic spirit mingle. All these heighten the effect and give to the story an erotic air, but they are not integrated in the plot and remain extraneous to it.

Apotashu planned to produce a trilogy of Polish Jewish life, and consequently he wrote another novel entitled *In 1863*, the year of the Polish uprising against Russia in which this revolt is depicted. Mordecai is the hero also of this novel. He became, as we have seen, interested in the Polish cause and his activities in this revolt are the theme of the story. Half of the novel portrays scenes in Paris where the revolt was prepared, and in which activity Mordecai took an important part. But as in *Die Poilische Welder*, it is in the single chapters that the value of the novel lies, and not in the book as a whole. Still, the second novel possesses more unity and sequence than the first, and in general excels the former. The author displays much erudition and a fine historical sense. He studied the period carefully.

The same cannot be said about another novel of his which purports to deal with American Jewish life, *Arum Grand Street* (Around Grand Street). Like *Die Poilische Welder*, it is in reality composed of a number of short stories, many of which portray skilfully scenes in the life of the immigrant Jews in their adaptation to the new environment, but the unity is loose and the whole is purposeless. There are a motley of characters but no principal one. One of them, Pinchas, resembles Mordecai in his swaying between eroticism and religious mysticism. He is the son of Shabbatai, who unwillingly is forced by his followers to assume the role of a *Zaddik*, and the religiosity is imparted also to the son. The latter, though, struggles against the heritage and he leaves the *Yeshibah* which he attended for years, and for a time leads a Bohemian life. Later, though, he is overmastered again by his religiosity and becomes the associate of a certain Abraham and helps him to establish a cult of pietism in the New York ghetto, but he is ensnared again by the charms of Regina, a woman who made a profession of her beauty. Exotic episodes abound in this novel as in the former, among them the establishment of the residence of Shabbatai in a cave outside of New York, and the cave becoming a Mecca for his fol-

lowers. Not less strange is the death of Shabbatai who leaves his cave one night, wanders in the surrounding forest, and falls dead on the tracks of a railroad. There is hardly any sequence between the events, nor is there any attempt on the part of the author to explain the occurrence of such strange episodes. They just take place without antecedents. Apotashu undoubtedly wanted to portray a phase in the life of the New York ghetto of the early twenties of this century, the revival of religiosity among certain sections of Jews, but was not successful.

His strength lies in the short story and his collection of stories entitled *Arum Die Hurbot* (Around the Ruins) containing sketches of Jewish life in Poland during the War and immediately after it is of human interest. Some of them are stirring, such as the *Mlawer Eidah* (The Community of Mlawe), *Ibergeblibener* (Left Over), and others. In the first, the flight of the Jewish community of the city of Mlawe during the World War is portrayed and the tribulations of the refugees on the road described. In the second, the tragedy of the Rabbi of the town of Lautenberg is described. This town in the Pozen province had, when under German domination, a prosperous Jewish community, but when it passed under Polish rule, it deteriorated and only a few were left. The Rabbi refuses to leave the Temple in which he officiated for decades in spite of the pleadings of his wife, and when the wolf knocks at the door, he steals one of the many silver cups belonging to the Temple to drive it away but remains at his post.

In numerous other stories which were collected under the title *Mlawe-New York*, the motives are taken both from Polish and American Jewish life. Among the latter, are some which portray episodes and incidents in the life of Jewish farmers of this country. In all these Apotashu is the skilful narrator and the dexterous portrayer of situations primarily in their external aspect, but seldom distinguishes himself by psychological insight and analysis.

Apotashu was not satisfied with the themes borrowed from Jewish life in this country and abroad but went to the Middle Ages in search for new ones and produced his *A Tog in Regensburg* and *Eliyahu Bachur*. The first is a portrayal of Jewish life in the city of Regensburg in the sixteenth century. There is no plot nor story but mere descriptions of the life of the community during one day. In order to make the portrait more effective he placed the ceremony of the marriage of the daughter of the Parnas of that community with the son of the leader

of the Jews in Worms in the center, and grouped around it all other scenes. The second treats briefly a few episodes in the life of the colorful personality of Elijah Bachur (Vol. II, Sec. 165) who was simultaneously, grammarian, writer of Yiddish romances, and teacher of Hebrew to prelates and cardinals of the Church. These sketches are among the best of Apotashu's work and his descriptive power attained in them its height. He caught the tone and color of the environment, and succeeded in reviving several moments of the past in glowing colors. His very style which contains numerous expressions of Judaeo-German is in complete harmony with the picture. Both historical portraits exhibit great art as well as mastery of the spirit of the period which they portray.

ii. David Pinski (1873), who is known both as a short story writer and dramatist, made his literary debut in Russia where he drew, as many of the Yiddish writers, his themes from the life of the Jewish workingmen and made his stories a medium of propagating the need for changes in social and economic life. In his stories written in this country, he exchanged the propaganda motive for that of love, and many of his sketches portray episodes containing phases of this elemental human emotion. Ultimately, however, he exhausted even this theme and turned to historical legends and folklore for source material, and was quite successful in this type of fiction. A number of such stories were collected. The first in that collection is his story, *Beruria*, the name of the wife of the *Tanna*, Rabbi Meir, who, despite her piety, knowledge, and wisdom, could not withstand the pursuit of an admirer and was about to yield to his importunities. But when she discovered that this was only a test of her fidelity, she committed suicide out of shame. Pinski elaborates the legend in an artistic manner, and even analyzes the emotions of both the admirer and Beruria during the trial period with fine psychological insight. He deviates somewhat from the original legend and makes Beruria die because of her chagrin at her husband's momentary doubt of her absolute devotion. Several other stories deal with historical themes, among them *Zerubabel*, in which the Prince of the House of David is made to protest vigorously against Mordecai who plans to save the Jews from the clutches of Haman by seeking protection through the charms of Esther. He advises rebellion and self-defense, but the people are with Mordecai, even his own beloved Shoshanah. Disappointed he forsakes his own love. A very touching episode is portrayed in

Die Wand (The Wall) in which a modern legend is utilized. During the post-War days, when Polish egotism rose to its height and with it hatred of the Jews, a patriotic Polish colonel leads a party of thirty-five Jews who were sentenced to be shot to the place of execution. He places them at a wall of a Russian monastery and gleefully executes his commission. A few days later, a fire breaks out in the city and all buildings are consumed including the monastery, but the wall remains. It is considered a miracle both by Jews and Gentiles and as a lasting reminder of an act of cruelty. There is, on the whole, little action in these stories of Pinski, but the description is vigorous and at times also tinged with poetic coloring.

Pinski wrote also several novels of which *Der Zurissener Mensch* displays his talent as a novelist at its best. It deals with American Jewish life during the War and portrays the contrast between the members of the upper stratum of Jewish society and the idealist leaders of the workingmen who have a definite purpose in life and find satisfaction in their work on behalf of others. There is no attempt to depict class struggle, but only a mild censure of the emptiness in the life of the rich, even of the best of them. Arnold Levenberg, the principal character, is the scion of a rich family who was brought up in an atmosphere saturated with the liberalism of the nineteenth century and is imbued with the temper of the society in which he moves. The fast life of the golden youth abhors him, and he is also much disturbed by the War and the spirit of hatred it introduced in life. Simultaneously, though, he is attracted by the vivacity and charm of one of the most reckless and unscrupulous young ladies of his circle, Katherine Shufro, and a desire to possess her awakens within him. He struggles against it, for her conduct as well as that of her family goes against the finer grain of his nature, but the struggle is difficult for he is ensnared by the young lady who is after his riches more than after him. He meets other young women, among them a certain Miss Mankoff who is a leader in the Socialist-Zionist circles, and through her he comes in contact with the typical Jewish life of the ghetto and its movements. He is impressed by the ideals of that life and the earnestness of the leaders, especially by the nobility of character of Miss Mankoff. He is greatly attracted to her but she does not encourage him. He therefore returns from time to time to Katherine, but is ultimately freed from his infatuation for her because of several scandals in her family and primarily because of the loss of his money,

and regaining repose of soul, he marries a girl better suited to his character and upbringing. The novel possesses unity and sequence and the plot is well developed. There are a number of dialogues and discussions on war and peace, democracy and nationalism, all of which throw light on some phases of Jewish life during the period. The novel is not distinguished by heights or depths of thought or art, but, as a whole, can be considered of the better type of Yiddish fiction produced during the second period.

iii. A. Raboy belongs to the younger writers who assert that they follow the cult of art for art's sake, and writing to them is an expression of the impressions they receive in their observations of life. He possesses an observant eye and descriptive ability but little narrative skill. The short story, or rather the sketch, is his fort  . As an impressionistic writer, he portrays scenes, and his themes are often mere episodes in the life of children or adolescents; at one time, it may be a forsaken synagogue; at another time, the eviction of a poor family, and numerous other events which life may offer. In all these stories there is no attempt on the part of Raboy at psychological analysis or at development of a plot; but he merely portrays and quite often few traits or features in the sketch make us think and reflect. His portraiture possesses a subjective trait which makes us feel that the writer is deeply interested in what he delineates, and expresses his own reaction to the scene described. Thus far for his general sketches, but Raboy has also a specialty. He is one of the few Yiddish writers who forsook New York and took as their themes the life of Jewish farmers and even ranchers in the far West. He himself lived for a number of years on a ranch, and a collection of such stories is the result. This collection is distinguished by a new note, a fine understanding of animal life. There are several stories which deal primarily with animals, and some of them evince real art. Such is *Dick's Selbstmord* (Dick's Suicide) in which the plight of an old horse, forsaken by its owner, is described in such a manner that we may conclude that his death was not an accident but a conscious act, a result of deep despondency.

iv. David Ignatow is another writer whose purpose is to express himself rather than to narrate and tell a story. He wrote short stories and novels, but in all of them the subjective note is dominant. There are two fundamental tones in his writings, the idealization of love, and an indefinite striving to change the prosaic reality into a wider and more

beautiful world. Baruch, the principal character of his novel, *In Kesselgrub* (In the Maelstrom), typifies both these traits. He is a Yiddish writer who made a name for himself in the ghetto by his stories, and is consequently considered a hero in his circle which consists of young intelligent shop workers, both men and women. He proposes the idea that the Jews must leave the large towns and settle on the land. He even attempts to organize a movement to establish coöperative farm settlements. However, he is more of a dreamer than a practical man, and his plans are never realized. But the very talk of changing our mode of life, and his constant preaching that we must know the world and try to understand it, that we must strive to "distance of vision"—a favorite phrase with our author—make him a person of special attraction, primarily to the women who shower their love on him. He, however, does not attach himself to anyone of them, and though he really loves Hannah, a young married woman who secretly loves him too, he is satisfied with the knowledge of their mutual feeling which is to him a symbol of the eternal emotion of love. There is, on the whole, little action in the novel, but instead numerous dialogues in which Baruch, the principal interlocutor, expresses his ideas on God, life and the world, and the destiny and character of the Jewish people. But in all these there is little of the positive and still less clarity. We feel that the author is struggling to develop a view of life, but that we have only fragments which can by no means be put together into one whole.

The same traits are also manifested in his other stories which deal with the life of our own generation. He is more successful in dealing with some historical themes. His story, *Der Gibber* (The Hero), is a fine poetic elaboration of the Biblical episode of Jephtha and his daughter. He also wrote a volume of legendary tales called *Wunder Meises Fun Alter Prag* (Miracle Tales from Old Prague), in which there are more miracles than tales, for he fails entirely to grasp the character of such stories, and consequently there is little of the folk spirit in them. Ignatow possesses descriptive ability and many of his passages charm us by the poetic style and the mystic halo which he throws around phenomena of nature or episodes of life, or even the physical appearance of some of his characters.

v. The writers hitherto discussed constitute the leaders of Yiddish fiction of the last two or three decades, and it is they who gave it a

different direction and widened its horizon to include portrayal of Jewish life in more than one phase. These writers, however, are not the only ones. There is a host of short story writers and novelists who helped to swell Yiddish fiction and whose work bears the stamp of new tendencies. Of these the most noted are the novelist, Chaimowitz, who attempted to write several novels, among them one on the life of Jesus—a favorite theme with Yiddish writers; L. Shapiro, a writer of exotic stories with a special liking for the abnormal in life; and Isaac Reis, the humorist, better known by his pseudonym, Moishe Nadir.

Nadir is a prolific writer and his numerous feuilletons and stories have been collected into several volumes. He possesses an observant eye which sees the ludicrous in life, especially in American Jewish life as far as it is reflected in the ghetto, its incongruities and its pettiness. He is primarily a feuilletonist and his sketches are brief, but they reveal here and there a fundamental comic trait of the various phases of life. He points out the incongruity in the false idealism of certain classes in the ghetto by portraying a man who assures us of his anarchism, though he is a prosperous business man and follows all the ways of convention; and similarly he delineates, in a number of humorous sketches, other comic traits in human character in general and in the Jewish in particular, such as false dignity (A Ganew); the tendency of some Jews to offer unsolicited advice (A Iddishe Tewa); or the rush for speculation, excessive competition, and numerous other human weaknesses. He has a special talent for the art of *reductio ad absurdum* and often proves quite successfully how frail is the wall which separates the sublime from the ridiculous.

However, much of his humor consists in his language, in his use of puns, quips, and exaggerations, and is saturated with local color intelligible only to the initiated, but from time to time he penetrates deeper into life, and as stated, points out its incongruous and comic features. On the whole, his writings are imbued with a spirit of light pessimism as if he seems to say, "Life is vain; why then the rush, the pose of earnestness and seriousness?" Nadir introduced his humor into criticism and he wrote a number of literary feuilletons in which he whips with the scourge of his humor many of the leading Yiddish writers and dramatists. The great defect of Nadir is that he is primarily a journalistic humorist, and most of his sketches contain only sparks and flashes of a fine sense of humor, but not its full light and glow.

141. YIDDISH POETRY OF THE SECOND PERIOD

In a still greater degree than prose did Yiddish poetry, after 1905, swerve from the path trodden by the earlier bards of the first period. The spirit of class struggle disappeared almost entirely from poetic productions, and a proletarian poem became a rarity. Instead we have poems imbued with a genuine Jewish spirit, expressing a longing for the great cultural heritage of the people. Sympathy with and grief at the fate of the Jewish people, on the one hand, and thirst for beauty, for love, and for communion with nature, on the other hand, are the leading motives of the late Yiddish poetry, though there is no lack of others.

As we have seen, Rosenfeld initiated the change, and he was soon joined by others who completed it. Among the leading poets of this period are Solomon Bloomgarden (1872-19) better known as Yehoash; Abraham Walt, popularly known under his pen-name A. Liesin; and H. Leiwick (1888).

i. Yehoash made his literary debut in Russia, but unlike other Yiddish poets in that country who wrote in an atmosphere saturated with socialistic and radical aspirations, his was imbued with a spirit of love and loyalty to Jewish tradition and favorable to the national idea, and this spirit is expressed in all his poems, most of which were produced in this country. The fundamental trait of his poetry is the continuous striving, though the goal is not very clear to him. In one of his poems, *Gewisheit* (Certainty), he expresses his longing for certainty, though he knows he cannot find it. He is, however, satisfied with the mere search for it even if his life will prove to be a series of errors. This tone is heard in many of his poems, for he is always longing for something, whether for love, or communion with nature, or for firm belief. As a result of this spiritual restlessness, his poetry is varied. He began, most likely under the influence of Frug, with Biblical and Agadic themes, and then turned to folk legends and depicted many a scene of old, or interpreted a prophetic thought in fine measured verse, but in most of these poems he is more the portrayer, the narrator, than the poet who fashions old motives into new creations. On the whole, he adds little of his own. There is beauty in these poems, but they do not stir us. The best of them is the cycle, *Shlomes Ring*, in which he tells us of Solomon's glory and his subsequent fall through the jealousy and envy of the Ashmedai, king of the demons, who along

with his host was the slave of the king's magic ring. But when Ashmedai obtained the ring by a device, he sat on Solomon's throne, while the latter wandered around in the great world forsaken by all. There is vigor and charm in the description of the king's glory, but little is said of the tragedy of the fall. It is dismissed with a paraphrase of several verses from Kohelet ascribed to the wise ruler.

In his numerous nature poems, many of which were written during the poet's stay in Colorado, we note a fine sense of beauty and a mastery of description. He is attuned to all the manifestations of nature, whether sunrise or sunset, the quiet night or the raging storm, the blooming colorful spring bubbling with life and energy, or the rainy fall, or the frosty winter—all find expression in his poems. At times, he introduces a lyrical note in his descriptions, for the mood of his soul changes with the impressions of the world. Night arouses in him dreams long forgotten, while the fall with its rains and winds, which strips the forest of its beauty, is symbolic to him of the vicissitudes of life.

His love poems are many, but their fundamental trait is reminiscence of past love, of the happiness he once had and which he could now have were that love to continue. His desire for love is strong and he expresses it in a number of poems. That love, though, is of the ideal type and is devoid of passion. Like in the nature poems, so the love songs are frequently tinged with a lyric strain. Of these, *Zwei Blumen* is a typical example. In this short poem, the bard tells of two withered flowers which he treasures; one was taken from the wreath which adorned the locks of his beloved while dancing happily, and the other was plucked from the rose bush which sprouted on her grave.

His lyrics are characterized by an indefinite striving for truth and a longing for power to do good and be a source of blessing to all. In one of his poems, *Der Starkster* (The Mightiest), he speaks of his desire to be like the dew which nourishes the earth, like the flower which gives pleasure by its beauty and perfume, and finally to be the one who will heal the wounds, unite the separated, and love all. He, however, knows his limitations and hence there is a note of wistfulness in his lyrics. At times, he prays to God to grant him the boon of love, so that he may overcome hatred and animosity which life presses upon him. At other times, in moments of happiness, it seems to him that his request is granted and he offers a prayer of thankfulness for every bit of good he derived from life, even for the pain and sorrow which

he succeeded in overcoming and stifling. But at other times, doubt enters his mind as to whether he really has not lost his way in life. Thus our poet wavers between hope and doubt and is always searching for an anchor in the turbulent sea of life. Some of his lyrics are tinged with a religious note. Yehoash wrote a number of poems which he entitled national. They are permeated with a genuine spirit of sorrow and grief at Jewish suffering, but little of the hope of a renaissance and rehabilitation.

Our poet also distinguished himself as a fabulist and wrote a book of fables. A number of them have motives borrowed from the Midrash or from La Fontaine and other older fabulists, but many are original and contain reflections upon life and human weaknesses. Some excel by illuminating flashes of thought of which *Der Glock Un Die Metalen* (The Bell and the Metals) is an example. The sounds of the bell in the Church tower were carried far and wide into the valley below and people listened to them with attention. The metals in the dome of the church, jealous of the fame of the bell, complained that the bell has nothing in its composition except what they contribute. "True," answered the bell, "I possess only your qualities and properties, but it is in me that they join in a harmony, and it is I that give them expression." The moral is that the poet may possess no new emotions nor entirely original thoughts, but it is he who harmonizes the feelings and thoughts of other men and expresses them.

Viewing the poetry of Yehoash as a whole, we can say that while it does not rise to great heights, there is a vigor and beauty both in its content and style, and there reverberates in it the cry of a soul longing for belief, truth, and goodness.

ii. A more vigorous bard who rises to great heights is the second leading Yiddish poet, Abraham Walt-Liesin (1873-1938). He, like Yehoash, made his debut in Russia in the years 1888-1890, but unlike him, not with Biblical motives—these came later—but with revolutionary songs. Like many young men of his time and age, he was swayed by the secret revolutionary movement which spread in those years among the Jewish youth. However, this tendency did not in any way impair the Jewish spirit with which he was imbued nor did it diminish the love for his people and the traditions and heritage of the ages which was ingrained in him by his home environment and the typically Jewish education which he had received. Liesin is, with the exception

of Bialik and Frug, the most genuine Jewish poet who expressed in a forceful manner the Jewish tragedy of the exile, and simultaneously the glory and the light of the spiritual life in the ghetto.

Even socialism to which idea he remained true throughout his life attracted him primarily because of its idealism in which he saw a reflection of the prophetic visions. It is the light of the ideal in the revolutionary movement, as he says in one of his early poems, *Ahin* (Thither), which enchanted the young soul saturated with the Jewish spirit, and in the devotion and self-sacrifice of the young Jewish revolutionaries he saw a continuation of the spirit which animated the Jewish martyrs of the ages and he believed that their example will, like that of the former, also shine through the future generations. Hence, he glorified that idealism in numerous songs. Some of them are lyrical, and some, portraits of tragic episodes in the life and death of these revolutionaries. Of these especially touching is a poem, *Oifen Weiten Zofen* (In the Far North), in which two pictures are drawn, one of a young revolutionary dying in Siberia and the other of his mother in the Pale of Settlement, who on a warm spring day thinks of her son dying in his lonely hut on the banks of the ice-covered river, Lena. There is much feeling for human suffering in the early poems, but this is always accompanied by a Jewish note. Years later, the Jewish note in his poems becomes more evident. Thus in one of his fine lyrical poems written in 1930 but still imbued with the spirit of his youth, he glorifies the Jewish saints of the past and the present by singing of the march of his great-grandfather—symbol for the Jewish people—through the ages, and his own walk through life. He and his great-grandfather are one in spirit and have one aim in common—to bring light to the world. He sees in the striving of the Jewish youth for progress, social freedom, and justice, the revenge of the Jew for all the suffering he has endured, namely the bringing of light in the world. A similar motive appears in another poem of the same period, *Simhat Torah Bein Tog* (The Day of the Feast of the Law), in which he portrays an episode of his early revolutionary days. His father came home to dinner from the celebration of the Feast of the Law at the synagogue and he, the young son, returned from a secret revolutionary meeting. At the table the atmosphere is strained; the father sings a religious song, the son hums a revolutionary refrain. Glances meet, in which a duel between two worlds, two ideals go on. But, concludes the poet, pleading to the shadow of the past:

O father, we went the same way
 Though each separately,
 Both sought in the grayness of the days
 The spirit of the Holiday—the miracle.¹

It did not take long and Liesin's poetry took a different turn. The Jewish heritage of generations and of his youth clamored for expression and the poet devoted himself to that task. There are three fundamental motives in the large number of poems written by our bard in this country. These are the glorification of the spiritual life of the near past, the tragedy of the Jewish suffering through the ages, and the exaltation of the heroism manifested throughout Jewish history. Like Bialik, Liesin was a student of the *Yeshibah* and absorbed the spirit of that life until it became an integral element of his personality of which he could not divest himself in spite of all his vicissitudes. And like him, he felt the deep pathos displayed in the disintegrating Jewish life, in the vanishing of the old forms, in the gradual extinguishing of the inner light which shone modestly but with such warm glow within the walls of the ghetto, and he was moved to perpetuate that life in poetry. He does not possess the wings of Bialik, nor his prophetic tone, nor his lyric strength, for he is primarily a narrative and epic poet, yet there is sufficient glow, warmth, and color in his poems of the Jewish past to make them reveal the spiritual beauty and idealism in all phases and nuances in radiant colors.

There is a long cycle of poems devoted to the Jewish life of the near past in which these qualities appear at their best. The spirit of these poems is typified in one entitled *Idish* in which our bard sings a panegyric to the language of the masses. He is not chauvinistic, as other Yiddishists are; he knows its limitations, its humble origin, for he says in her name, "I come to you, my child, from silent exiles, from crowded ghettos hemmed in all around. I have only the grace of the *Tehinot* of the pious; I have the beauty of sacrifice for *Kiddush ha-Shem*." And again, "I accompanied your ancestors for centuries and absorbed the wrath and sorrow of ages and I hammered out through generations the will to live for the sake of the holy Torah and to die for it as well." "And," concludes the poet, "if thou seekest to find beauty in the ghetto, know then that no beauty is as charming as that of the human soul, as that which radiates from the soul of the people."

This poem is in a way symbolic of the spirit expressed in all the songs

¹ Collected Poems, Vol. I, p. 166.

of Liesin which glorify Jewish life of the near past. The beauty he sings of is the beauty of the soul of the people as expressed in the observance of the holidays, of the Sabbath, of the years in the *Heder*, of the entire Jewish environment of his youth. He sings of the joy of Simḥat Torah, of the gladness of Succoth, of the eternal glow of the Hanukkah lights, of the sublime piety of the Day of Atonement, and of the personality of Moses as reflected in the celebration of Shebuot, and of numerous other phases. In all these, not only is his love for that life reflected, but he succeeds in reviving it in its full glory. Especially charming are his poems of certain moments of Jewish life in which the full force of folk piety is described. Such are *Ashré Tmime Dereḳ* and *Der Kapitel Kuf Yud Tet*. Both have the same motive, the reciting of Chapter CXIX of the Psalms Saturday at twilight. In that moment, when the Sabbath is about to depart and the prosaic week ready to enter, the Jew expressed all his longing for rest and for comfort in the melancholy melody of the Psalms. And this indefinable spirit is caught by our poet in a marvelous way which recalls to many a reader his childhood days. The height of this class of poems is reached in the one entitled *In Goen's Klois* (In the Synagogue of the Gaon), in which the poet's piety, his longing for the spiritual Jewish life, and his love for its holiness and purity, is conveyed in exquisite verses in which the personality of the Gaon of Wilna is portrayed in its fullness.

Similarly, there found expression in his poems the aspirations of the Hassidic saints, the *Besht* and Levi Yizḥak, the opponents of the Gaon. Liesin made no distinction and every great Jewish personality found in him its exponent. However, the fullest development of his Muse does not lie in this direction, but in the poetic portrayal of the great tragedy of the Jewish people on the wide canvas of history. Many were the poets who were impressed by the grand drama of the Jewish past, but none as deeply as Liesin, and he can veritably be called the poet of Jewish history. He was moved to the depths of his soul, not so much by the suffering and agony which forms the very warp and woof of the long story of our people, but mainly by the spirit of idealism which permeates that suffering, the spirit of martyrdom which not only ennobled and exalted an entire people but gave it eternity and infinite power of endurance, raising it above time and space. And it is this spirit to which our bard endeavored to give expression, namely, to reveal to the readers its inner light and beauty.

Time and again he returns to the theme; cycle after cycle of poems are devoted to it. Now it is Judah Maccabee of whose deeds the poet sings, following him step by step from his appearance on the arena of history to his tragic death; then it is the martyrs and heroes of the First Crusade who pass before us in a series of poems exalting not their lives but their death for the sake of God, and raising them to an eternal symbol. At another time, the themes are the dry records of the Mediaeval chronicles, *Zemah David* or the *Emek ha-Bakah* (Vol. II, Secs. 130, 132), in which the poet breathes his spirit and there rise before us from the musty pages figure after figure clothed in a halo of sanctity who overwhelm us by their strength of spirit and indomitable will. Again, roaming the pages of history, the poet's eye is caught by the glorious personality of an Akiba who met a martyr's death with glee and joy, for it was his life's desire to give all for the sake of his God, or of a Judah ben Baba who died cheerfully that the Torah might live in Israel, or of a Meir of Rothenberg (Vol. II, Sec. 68) who spent years in a cold and narrow prison refusing to be ransomed in order to save Israel from the rapaciousness of kings and barons. He sings of these heroes of the past, who, though long dead, still live in the recesses of the soul of the people. They are also alive to the poet who turns to them for instruction and inspiration. Thus, in one of his poems in which Solomon Molko is the central figure, he says, "O, teach me, Rabbi Solomon, and reveal to me the source of thy miraculous power, how to follow thy way—the way of sanctification of God, *Kiddush ha-Shem*."²

Of all these historical poems, especially moving is the cycle of seven songs entitled *Bei Der Wand* (At the Wall). The wall referred to is the western wall of the Temple at which, on the night of the Ninth of Ab, the poet visions himself standing, and there rise before him shadows of the past. There flits before him the shadow of a zealot who died before that wall in the belief that the destruction of the Temple would mark also the end of the nation. "But lo," says the poet, "the nation still lives and its children still come to the wall which is witness not only to the eternity of the people but to its burning desire for restoration." Then follow other spirits, among them Bar Kokba, who symbolizes to the bard the strength of will to live and the struggle of the people for existence. Finally, there appears in vision the Via Dolorosa, the narrow street leading to the sepulchre and the Mosque

² Ibid., p. 72.

of Omar, both of which symbolize the long ages of persecution undergone by Judaism at the hands of the daughter religions. In the last poem there is a note of irony at the honor bestowed by the nations on a dead Jew, while they torture and persecute the living Jews. The note of irony is especially evident in his cycle of poems in which the motives are taken from the early moments of Christianity, episodes in the life of Jesus, of the apostles Matthew and Paul, Mary Magdalene, and the Madonna. In all of these the irony is not only keen but bitter, particularly in *Die Madonna*. He asks her why she, a Jewish woman, who knew grief and sorrow, is silent at the sight of the infinite suffering which her brethren undergo at the hands of those who kneel before her statue? He further chides her for the Christian doctrines which make life itself a sin and flight from it a virtue of which she is a symbol, and he wonders whether she does not sometimes mock at the monks and nuns kneeling at her altar.

Liesin wrote also a number of poems on Biblical motives which charm us by their beauty and exalt us by their vigor. In all of these he is not merely the narrator, but the interpreter, and the episodes of old symbolize the eternal vicissitudes of the people. As a poet of life he composed numerous poems of present day Jewish life and his comparatively large cycles, *In Der Neier Welt* (In the New World) and *New York in Bild und Klang* (New York in Picture and Song), contain many a poem in which both the life of the noisy and tumultuous city and the silent tragedies of individuals, victims of circumstances and destiny, are reflected.

Life and history are the two poles of our bard, and consequently he wrote few nature and hardly any love poems. Moreover, even in the few nature poems we hear the echo of bubbling life, for it is nature as revealed in the midst of the hum and bustle of a large city that he sings of and not of the beauty of the dale and forest. Nor was he affected, in spite of the deep love for his people, by the new spirit of national renaissance, and the realization of the historic dream of restoration which he knew so well stirred his lyre but once. In a moment of enthusiasm he penned his poem, *Die Pionieren*, in which he sings with glee of the rebirth of the nation. On the whole, he knew not the song of hope. His Muse was dedicated to the tragedy and heroism of a martyred nation of which he sang both beautifully and vigorously. And for this he deserves a place of honor among the singers of Israel.

iii. H. Leiwick, like Liesin, is a poet of life and suffering, but it is

not the nobility and sanctity of the ghetto life of the near past, nor the suffering of his martyred nation which he sings of. The life and suffering which find such deep expression, though frequently in half stammering and half symbolic manner, is primarily the generally human and only occasionally is it tinged with Jewish grief. He is mainly the Yiddish poet of suffering humanity, the singer of the *Weltschmerz*. This trait is partly explained by the experiences of his life. As a child of poor parents he tasted in early life the pangs of poverty and his impressionable soul absorbed silently the suffering which was the share of all those he knew. It made him morose and sullen. Later, as a youth, he joined the socialistic *Bund* and participated in illegal, political action for which he was arrested, sentenced to four years prison at hard labor, and at the expiration of this time was exiled to a lonely village in Siberia whence he escaped and arrived in New York in 1913.

The numerous manifestations of brutality towards the political prisoners which he witnessed during these years, the cry of agony of the unfortunates when under torture, the blood flowing from the naked bodies when stricken by the scourge, the loneliness of the exiles, and their aimless wandering on the snow covered tundras—all these became part and parcel of his personality, and, when he began to sing, they formed integral elements of his Muse.

However, were Leiwick merely an emotional poet, we would have many poems in which human pain and suffering are portrayed in gruesome words and in a stirring manner. But he is more than that. He is also a thinker and visionary; his eye sees much deeper than the mere agonies and twitching of the bodies under the knout. He also feels the pain borne in silence, the unexpressed, and not only borne by those near him but also by those far from him. He sees the suffering in life in all forms, and also the terrors of death. The years he spent in a Denver Sanitarium for tuberculosis brought him in close contact with that terror and made him see how great is the agony of the sick at the approach of death. He began then to reflect on the everlasting problems of life and death, of evil and suffering in the world, of the longing implanted in man for a better world where peace and justice will reign, of the rise and fall of man, of the conflict of necessity and free will, and of the established order of nature and the world. He struggled with these sublime thoughts and endeavored to give them expression. But, whether because of the magnitude of the task or be-

cause of his inability to rise to heights from which the all-embraciveness of human life is revealed to us in its complexity, Leiwick finds great difficulty in expressing all he wants to say and in many of his poems and dramas we feel the struggle of the poet with his material which serves as the medium of his thoughts and feelings. As many a poet before him, he grasps at the symbol, allegory, and the vision as channels of expression. But the use of symbols and allegory has its disadvantages. They become not means of expression of ideas but ends in themselves, for our poet, endowed with a rich imagination and power of description, often loses himself in the tangle of symbol and allegory, and a number of his poems, especially the longer ones, and some parts of his dramas, become unintelligible, for the kernel of thought is lost in the maze of vision and phantasy. Still, even in these there frequently flash brilliant thoughts and illuminating poetic insight, the quality of which is enhanced by the use of a symbol.

In two of his poems, Leiwick offers us a glimpse into the nature of his poetry and delineates its fundamental traits. The first is *A Lied Wegen Sich* (A Poem About Myself), in which he tells us that the blood he saw flowing from bodies whipped in prison always cries in his poems; he tried to cover it up with snow—reference to his songs of snow covered Siberian plains—but it is not stilled. From time to time it cries out. This blood is the symbol of the sorrow of his soul and human suffering which breaks forth continually in the poems. The second is *Blinde Tumanen* (Blind Fogs), in which he urges man to be courageous and stride through the fog of the world, for though he may know that because of the fog little will be changed in the world, yet constant striding, even through a fog, will bring one to a goal. The strider is the poet himself. He endeavors to grasp the mysteries of the world and life which he sees dimly as if through a fog and endeavors to express them through signs and symbols.

As a result of these impressions, thoughts, strivings, and struggles, Leiwick's poetry sways between a clear ringing cry of woe at human suffering and a symbolic expression of man wallowing in his misery, revolting against it, and struggling toward the creation of a better world. These form the poles of his poetry, but there are, of course, many nuances.

He began with his Siberian poems in which there is the echo of the suffering of the political exiles, the clang of the chains of the prisoners, the sigh of the dying revolutionaries in the huts scattered through

wide, ice-bound tundras, and there is also in them the colorful description of the frozen plains dazzling in their white cover of snow in the rays of the cold sun. In all these there is much pathos of human agony which was lived through by the poet and he shares it with the reader. But this natural cry at the suffering he saw and experienced did not satisfy the poet. He wanted to express more and deal with the problem of suffering on a larger scale as reflected in life as a whole, especially in social relations. But the attempt was too difficult and, as said, he turned to symbol, and the result is a struggle to express a multitude of emotions and thoughts and inability to accomplish the task. Such is the impression one gains from the reading of a number of poems collected under the title *In Keinem's Land* (In No Man's Land). The very title is a symbol. It signifies emotions and expressions which belong to no one in particular but to all men. They may mean much and they may mean nothing, all depending on one's attitude to life. They seem to mean much to the poet, for he resorts to all devices to express himself, symbol, exaggeration, gruesomeness, and we feel that the poet wants to convey to us the pain gnawing at his heart, the disappointment in progress, the futility of striving, but we rather sense these things intuitively than read them in the poems. The symbols are not always clear, and like in futuristic pictures, we discern only from time to time a flash of thought. He is, however, at times keen in his symbolics and succeeds in conveying a thought in a phrase or title. Thus, in the poem, *Der Kranker Feigel* (The Sick Bird), much of which is mystical, the symbol of the very title impresses upon us the tragedy of those who strive with all their soul to fly and reach the heights, but whose wings are clipped by circumstances. In a similar way, he conveys to us in his symbolic poem, *Shoiben Antkegen Shoiben* (Windows Opposite Windows), two contrary attitudes we experience simultaneously in our relation with our fellow-men, both nearness and distance. The opposite windows reflecting the light of the rooms invite us to meet our fellow-men, but on coming nearer there emanates from them a strangeness which chills the longing for companionship—and we remain again in loneliness with ourselves. Similarly, we sense in his poem, *Die Geliweissenschein* (The Yellowish White Light), in which the color of the light of the electric lamps in the streets serve the poet as the symbol of the oncoming storm of passion which breaks out in the night life of the large city. There are many more poems in which the symbol is powerful and keen and arouses

us to thought and reflection, but many in which the nebulousness drowns the thought.

Leiwick also devoted several long poems to Jewish suffering during the years of 1918-1919 when pogroms and slaughter abounded. In these the poet expresses deep pain and agony, but is overwhelmed by his own feelings and speaks in allegory, phantasy, and exotic phrases, so that the whole is wrapped in a haze of nebulosity. Yet some of the passages are very powerful. Such is the one in the poem, *Die Stal* (The Stable), which was indited when he received information that the great synagogue in his home town was turned into a stable for horses. In that passage, he contrasts the pictures of the lion, leopard, eagle, and deer engraved in the corners of the ceiling as symbols of strength, swiftness and striving in the worship of God, with the fat horses below standing over their crib, symbols of gross sensuality and brute strength.

When Leiwick emerges from the fog which surrounds him at times and looks at the world around him with clear eyes he rises to heights. Of such a nature are most of his poems in the collection *Lieder Fun Gan-Eden* (Songs From Paradise), which were written during his stay at the Sanitarium at Denver. The title is both ironical and symbolical, signifying nearness to death. In these the tragedy of disease and human suffering as contrasted with the beauty and sublimity of the surrounding nature, the natural impulse of men to cling to life even when they hear the flapping of the wings of death, the loneliness of the sick, their longing for friendship, their grasping at moments of pleasure—all these come to full expression. These are only the main motives, but there are numerous others. Our poet is never at a loss for a motive; his symbolism helps him to see in any trivial incident great significance. Thus, the motive in one of his fine poems, *Der Epelbaum Derzelt* (The Apple Tree Tells), is a withered apple tree which he noted on one of his walks, but he turns it into a tragic symbol of all those who ceased to create and produce for one reason or another. With great skill and pathos he describes the dream of the tree of its former productivity recollecting its past joy of creation and the pain of its present barrenness. It finds an echo in the heart of many a reader. The crown of these poems is *Die Balade Fun Denver Sanitarium* (The Ballad of Denver Sanitarium), in which the tragedy of a young patient, Nathan Newman, who came to the hospital at the age of sixteen and lay there fifteen years, is masterfully described. The poet makes us see and feel the holiness of life, even of the humblest

man. With great love he describes in detail the few incidents of the boy's life, how from his sick bed he followed the socialist movement and participated in it in thought. He then goes on to portray his apparent reconciliation with death when he felt it approaching and simultaneously his revolt in the last moments of parting with life, his presenting his few belongings to a sister in a distant city, and the final moment when the last flicker is extinguished at the time when the last rays of the sun disappear beyond the pinnacles of the Rockies. All these are drawn in simple but stirring language.

The disease with which he was affected made the poet think of Spinoza who was likewise tubercular, and he penned a cycle of poems under that title in which he endeavors to rise above the suffering of the world to communion with the All, with the universe. He seeks comfort in Spinoza's intellectual love, in the hermit's philosophy that all is necessary, and even suffering has its place in the great scheme. There is a religious note in the poems but not genuine. We feel that this poet of human woe is not satisfied with the cold love of the intellect, but longs for a warmer glow of the heart and the restfulness he seems to find in identification with nature is only simulated.

He turned again to symbolism in his two dramas or, as he calls them, dramatic poems, *The Golem* (Homunculus) and the *Geulah Comedy*, which are in reality two parts of one drama. The first was written in the years 1918-1920, and the second two years later. In both there is an echo of the vicissitudes of the times, especially the events in Russia. The poet, who dedicated a number of years to the socialist ideal which was supposed to be the Messiah of humanity, undoubtedly saw in the Russian Revolution the beginning of that redemption. But his poetic sense and his great sympathy for human suffering intuitively told him that this path of redemption is not the right one, for it is besmirched with blood. He was perplexed and this perplexity was increased by the great suffering the Jews of Russia experienced during the early years of the Revolution as a result of numerous pogroms in the Ukraine. This state of mind is reflected in the *Golem*, for in spite of the praises showered upon this drama, it lacks clarity and even purpose.

The general motive is the striving of the masses for redemption from the evils prevalent in social life and the difficulty of reaching that aim. He utilized an old Jewish legend which tells how Rabbi Judah Löw created by the means of the Ineffable Name a homunculus to protect

the Jews against attack by his physical strength. But he ultimately became by his brute strength a danger even to the Jewish community. His creator then caused him to return to the dust. The legend does not contain the Messianic element, but the poet introduces it. He implies, though not very clearly, that Rabbi Löw created the *Golem* for the purpose of blazing the path for the Messiah. He, the *Golem*, should avenge Jewish suffering, while the Messiah, whose soul is goodness itself, should appear when evil will be overpowered. All this is more implied than expressed, for the plot is poetic more than dramatic as it contains little action. The *Golem* is created, as said, for a great purpose, and he must dedicate himself to it, not to be affected by human passions and obey the will of Löw. But as soon as he is created, his rebellion begins. He is deeply impressed by the sight of Deborah, the Rabbi's granddaughter and attempts to kiss her several times. For a time he obeys the mandates of his creator and saves the Jews of Prague from a blood accusation, but finally revolts against subjection to the Rabbi and in anger attacks the Jews and sheds Jewish blood. Löw then returns him to the dust. In one of the scenes the Messiah appears in Prague in the guise of a young beggar whose body is covered with wounds—in accordance with the Talmudic legend—but Löw orders him back for the time had not yet come. The *Golem*, however, is greatly attracted to him and wants to follow him, but is restrained by the Rabbi. The poet introduces scenes and persons of an exotic character. Thus, there is a scene in which the Messiah, Jesus, and the *Golem* meet in an underground cave, and one of the characters, Tanhum, an insane man, constantly utters cries of woe. There is much art in the various parts of the drama and many scintillating thoughts are expressed in passages, but as a whole seems somewhat nebulous. The main idea seems to be that real redemption is goodness, but the path to it must also be accompanied by the shedding of blood which is, of course, an evil in itself. But who is the *Golem*? Does he symbolize the masses who at times are aroused by well meaning leaders to great actions, to revolutions in order to initiate a new order in life, but are dragged down by passions and other human weaknesses, and ultimately turn against their leaders and shed innocent blood? Or is he a general abstraction of human striving for the good which striving cannot be realized and must be subdued for a time? A partial answer is found in the second part—*Die Geulah Comedye*.

In that drama, written in later years when the Russian experiment

turned out a disappointment to many idealists among the radicals, the poet seems to find himself on firmer ground, and the ideals he wanted to convey become clearer to him. The plot is of a more fantastic nature, but there is sequence in the concatenation of events. The *Golem* who was returned to dust by Löw, after lying for centuries as a piece of clay in the garret of the descendants of that Rabbi, comes to life again. During the many years there was in that clay body a spark of life, and along with it also a longing for the Messiah of whom he had had a glimpse during his first existence. The desire and the longing were realized. On his resurrection, the *Golem* finds a different world. Here the poet utilized several Messianic legends, according to which the real Messiah, the son of David, will be preceded by a Messiah, the son of Joseph, who will carry on a war with Gog and Magog, two princes of evil, distinguished by their violence and shedding of blood. According to another legend, the evil prince will be Armilus, a human monster, born of a stone statue in the form of a woman. Leiwick combined the legends and made some changes in the content. When the *Golem* descends from the garret, the world is in the throes of redemption. Messiah ben Joseph is hard pressed by the forces of Magog who is also fighting Gog. The people who were with him at first forsake him. Armilus is not the prince of evil but the prophet of the present, i.e. the compromiser. He follows at first the Messiah ben Joseph, but when Magog triumphs he turns to him. The *Golem* goes to the desert to bring the real Messiah whom he resembles physically—his age-long longing changed his physiognomy. The Messiah ben David, who is called in the drama *Hanina*, i.e. graciousness, comes but is not welcomed by the people with the exception of a woman, Deborah, symbol of kindness. At first, the Messiah ben Joseph also welcomes him, but gradually changes his attitude as his fortune changes. The people rebel against Magog and follow Messiah ben Joseph. He also changes; power begets the desire for more power. In the struggle much blood is shed by the early Messiah, and he himself becomes bloodthirsty. *Hanina* is forsaken by everybody, even by the *Golem* who is swayed by the whirl of human passions which were let loose in the rejoicing at the redemption. Armilus, the prophet of the present, sides, of course, with the changed Messiah ben Joseph. *Hanina* is put in prison and tortured by the very one who is supposed to be his friend. However, a change takes place again; the people, satiated with lust and revenge upon their enemies, turn against the

Messiah ben Joseph, the tyrant, throw him into prison, clamor for Hanina whom they release from prison and demand that he execute the tyrant. He refuses but ultimately carries out the will of the people. This act, however, arouses in him a revulsion; he refuses to be the redeemer when redemption must take place through violence. And when the people clamor for him, he sends the *Golem* who resembles him and who in the last moment becomes again the follower of Hanina. He is grosser and can act as a redeemer, while Hanina is too noble for the role, and he goes back to the desert. Thus the drama or comedy ends abruptly.

There is no doubt that in this plot there is a keen criticism against the false idealism of the Russian redeemers, and in general, an illuminating commentary on the weakness of the people who rise and fall and are constantly fickle. The role of Armilus, the prophet of the moment, is both instructive and impressive, but the problem is not solved. There are, however, several indications towards a possible solution. In one of the scenes, the old man who is the guardian of Hanina says as follows, "The world belongs to the children. They will bring the real redemption for all, even for the older people." In another place, Hanina says, "Goodness and love do not come by themselves; we have to bring them." From these and especially from the important role which Deborah, who is, besides the incarnation of goodness, also the guardian of homeless children, plays in the drama, we can infer that the real redemption will come when a new generation properly educated will arise, but no more is said about the way to raise that generation except in an indirect manner when Hanina says, "Sorrow really means a sense of responsibility for all that happens, for all people and for all times." The question of how to inculcate this sense of responsibility is not answered. But after all, a poet must not solve all problems; the mere poetic presentation arouses thought. The value of the drama is enhanced by its artistic form in which Leiwick is at his best.

It must be noted, though, that in spite of the completely Jewish garb of these dramas, there is little of the Jewish spirit in the content. It is not the Jewish Messiah nor is it the hoped-for redemption, the one cherished by a martyred people for millennia. There is even no echo of the deep suffering of that people. As said, the *Geulah Comedye* was written under the impression of events in Russia which led to much disappointment in the ranks of its friends. Still, our interest in

these dramas is not lessened by the fact, for the problems raised are the concern of all.

Leiwick wrote also a number of social dramas, such as *Shmates* (Rags), dealing with poverty, the shop, and kindred matters, as well as several Biblical dramas, such as *Die Akedah* and *Sedom*, in which, digressing from the original, he introduces the motives of human suffering, of atonement for causing it, and of responsibility for grief. He also atoned partly for his aloofness from his people by a number of fine Palestinian songs composed after his visit to that country in 1936, which are distinguished by many qualities, especially by that of style. The great drama of the rebuilding of Palestine by the pioneers caught his fancy and he gave expression to it in the songs. The extensive and intensive production of our bard is undoubtedly an outstanding contribution to Yiddish poetry.

iv. There is very little that can be said about a host of young poets who made their appearance during the last two decades. They profess to follow a new path in poetry, and sing as they say, not for others, but for themselves. They are concerned primarily with expressing their own feelings at various moments in life. They say the ordinary sensations and human reactions to stimuli are more universal and may be of more interest provided they are expressed with sufficient depth. But there are no canons even for this depth except the mood of the singers themselves. As result of such theory, these bards have no lack of themes or motives, for every move, every impression serves them as a subject for a poem and they claim similar freedom in style. All words, even the vulgar and the most prosaic can convey an idea provided one knows how to read them. As a result, most of their poems often appear fantastic and purposeless except to the poets themselves. There are, of course, differences between the bards of this school, as some of them are less turbulent and express their reactions to life in a calmer manner. Their common characteristics, however, are a restless indefiniteness of purpose and a painful struggle at expression which they attempt to convey by symbols and signs. With few exceptions, they are all disappointed with life, frightened at the struggle for existence going on around them and imbued with sorrow.

The most typical of these young poets is Moses Leib Halpern (1886). In fact, in a poem on himself, *Mein Unruh Fun a Wolf*, he says distinctly that he is extremely restless, passes constantly from mood to mood, that life is boring, and that the call of the wild cries out to him.

And all these momentary changes in his personality he attempts to portray in exotic verses, fantastic expressions, and often vulgar phrases in his numerous poems, for he is very prolific. It must be admitted that through this whirl of verses, through this fantastic kaleidoscopic expanse of poems which confound us by their chaos, there is revealed to us in certain moments a personality which possesses power and which protests against the sham, falsehood, and injustice in life most vigorously. As a result, we meet occasionally a poem or stanza which stirs and moves us. Such a poem is *Der Saiger Geht* (The Clock Moves), in which the monotonous movement of the clock symbolizes to him his past life and also presages slowly approaching death. Powerful stanzas are also found in his otherwise chaotic cycles of poems, *A Nacht* (A Night) and *In Der Fremd* (In A Strange Land). The main motive of the first seems to be the struggle going on in society, the evils of wars and the great amount of human suffering. But all these appear to us only occasionally from a mist of stanzas which have no relation to each other, and in addition are gruesome in their imagery. In the second, there are some fine descriptions of New York at night, but again they are drowned in a mass of incoherent poems. He seems to be at his best in irony and sarcasm which is exemplified in one of his poems of the cycle, *A Nacht*. He asks ironically of Christian society, torn by wars of destruction, "Of what avail is your dream of the end of days when your Prince of Peace will appear; how many will remain to enjoy that peace; and what of the bloodshed through the generations? Will it not demand atonement?"

Judging the poetry of Halpern as a whole, we can compare it to a vast desert in which heaps of sand whirl aimlessly in grotesque shapes but here and there are scattered oases where there are trees bearing fine fruit. Is it worth while to exert energy and brave the tediousness and tribulations of the march to reach the oases? Only those who are attuned to the spirit of the poet can answer the question in the affirmative.

An exception of all the young poets is Zisha Landau who does not storm nor cry at the woes of life, nor is he bored by it, but rather takes it good-naturedly and enjoys every moment of his existence. He is an optimist and often sings of small things in life with feeling. This is perhaps his best trait, for otherwise he is commonplace and seldom attains any poetic height.

The other poets to be mentioned are Mani Leib (1884), Reuben

Eisland (1884), J. Rolnick (1879), and R. Ludwig (1895). They all sing in the general tone of the school. All attempt to express themselves and their attitude to life in various nuances, in the futuristic manner and in a restless tempo. We feel that they are striving hard to convey a thought, but seldom attain the goal, and only occasionally there flashes through in their poems an illuminating thought or a glowing emotion.

Apart from the school of individualistic poets, there are two other singers, E. Auerbach (1888) and J. J. Schwartz (1885). They were saved from the chaotic tendency in Yiddish poetry by their education which was imbued with the traditions of their race and by their saturation with the spirit of Jewish nationalism. The first, who spent a number of years in Palestine, sings of the charms and mysteries of that land, of the romantic life of the Bedouins and of the struggle of the Jewish pioneers. In his collection of poems called *Caravans*, we hear the slow rhythm of the tramp of the camels and the monotonous din of the bells on their necks as they plod along on the highways of Judea and Galilee, and in the verses there are reflected the sunsets and the deep blue skies of Palestine. Auerbach has an eye for the beauty of nature and he sings of it with great skill.

The second has to his credit a long narrative poem entitled *Kentucky*, the only one of its kind in Yiddish poetry. It is the tale of a Russian Jewish immigrant, Joshua by name, who came to Kentucky in the sixties, settled among the farmers, adjusted himself to the new environment, struck root in the soil, raised a large family which ramified into a number of branches, prospered, and became the leader of a town which he saw slowly grow up among the fields and mountains. The poet tells the story in great detail; he follows Joshua from the day he settled among the simple farmers in a corner of the Blue Grass State until his death in a thriving modern town. He tells of his early struggles to maintain the integrity of his Jewishness in a strange land, of the gradual estrangement from the old life, of the new life brought into the old house by the children born and bred in Kentucky who were saturated with its spirit of romanticism, daring and adventure, of the woes and joys of the Joshua family, of the tragedies that took place in their lives, the greatest of which was the marriage of the oldest son, Jacob, to a Gentile girl, of the paths in life which each of the sons and daughters trod—in short, we have a complete record of the vicissitudes of the entire family for half a century, not only chronicled but a vivified

poetic panorama of events and episodes full of color and human interest. The poem is replete with idyllic pictures of the early life of Joshua and his family, of moments when the traditions of the old home-town still found a resting place in the new environment, and there are also portrayals of scenes when life changed for Joshua, when luxury took the place of simplicity, old memories became dim, and the spirit of America in its Kentuckian garb filled his home. Nor are there missing poetic delineations of episodes in the life of new arrivals, other Jews, both of Russian and German origin who followed Joshua in their struggles and adjustments. The great merits of the poem, however, are the beautiful descriptions of nature in its various moments and seasons, and the color and tone of life in old Kentucky which serve as a frame to the tale of Joshua.

Another important contribution of Schwartz is *Unser Lied Fun Shpanye* (Our Song From Spain) which contains a collection of translations of selected poems of the leading poets of the Spanish Golden Age, such as Gibröl, Moses Ibn Ezra, and Judah ha-Levi. The translations are masterfully executed, for they retain the original religious spirit as well as the rhythm; the rhyme is ringing and the diction is lofty. The selections of each of the poets are introduced by a brief essay on the biography, personality and main characteristics of the poetry of the bard. These translations undoubtedly enriched Yiddish poetry produced in this country.

142. ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

The efforts to create a Yiddish literature in the country brought forward also a number of essayists and critics. However, a large number of these essayists can be so designated only by courtesy, as they devoted themselves primarily to the writing of articles for the daily press, and their activity, though extensive, was on the whole of ephemeral value. To the noted and most popular among the host of journalists and publicists belong Abraham Cahan, L. Miller, B. Feigenbaum, M. Zametkin, Baranow, Philip Kranz, Sh. Yanowsky, K. Forenberg, A. Koralnik, G. Bublik, and Mordecai Katz.

With the exception of the last three writers all belong to the radical or socialist parties, and they exerted great influence upon the large Jewish laboring masses for two generations, both as leaders in their efforts for the improvement of their economic position and as moulders of their opinions and views. It is largely due to their endeavors that

powerful trade unions were gradually built up by Jewish workers and that a well organized Jewish labor movement was developed. Of this group, A. Cahan, who has edited the socialist daily, *Der Forverts*, for a period of more than three decades, L. Miller, who served as editor of different periodicals, among them several dailies, M. Zametkin and K. Forenberg, distinguished themselves as popularizers of the socialist idea, as writers on economic questions, and mainly as moulders of the opinions of the laboring masses who looked to them for guidance. B. Feigenbaum and Philip Kranz were the "enlighteners" of the masses in matters of religion and culture. The former was especially noted for his zeal in combating religion and Jewish tradition. Due to his early Talmudic education of which some residue remained with him even in later years, he passed as the scholar in his circle, and armed with a rather superficial knowledge of theological, historical, and critical matters, he went forth to fight, as he said, the battle of progress against fanaticism. He wrote articles and essays against the sacredness of the dietary laws which were later collected in a brochure entitled *Kosher und Treif*, endeavored to divest the Jewish holidays of their religious character, and in general, attempted to weaken the hold of Judaism upon the masses. His influence, judged in the light of the present, was, on the whole, of small benefit to the masses for it robbed them of cherished beliefs and offered them little in exchange. The best that can be said in his defense is that he considered himself an apostle of progress and enlightenment. Kranz followed along similar lines, but lacking the Jewish education of Feigenbaum and being unable to season his articles with Talmudic quotations and Hebrew phrases, his authority suffered greatly. Baranow specialized in popularizing science and wrote a large number of articles and essays during two decades on various scientific subjects.

Koralnik, Bublik, and Katz belong to a different class. The former distinguished himself in the brief essay which deals with cultural and literary matters. He possessed wide knowledge, good literary taste, and a broad view of life, and was imbued with the spirit of Jewish nationalism. In addition, he mastered an elegant Yiddish style. As a result his essays are distinguished by content and form and are often tinged by a poetic and philosophic flavor. A collection of his selected essays appeared recently.

G. Bublik is one of the outstanding representatives of the traditional Yiddish press in this country and one of its best publicists and essayists.

As editor of the *Yiddishes Tageblatt* for two decades, he exerted great influence on a large number of traditionally-minded Jews through his editorials and timely articles. But in addition to these, he wrote several long series of articles or essays dealing with more important Jewish problems, such as Jewish nationalism, the persistent question of adjusting Judaism to modern conditions, and ancillary matters. These were collected by him in two volumes bearing the titles, *Min ha-Mezar* (Out of Anguish) and *Sak ha-Kol* (The Sum of All). These are characterized by vigor of style, clearness of thought, and a logical presentation of arguments. In general, he champions a religio-national view of Judaism and the Mizrachi, the religious Zionist party, found in him an able protagonist.

M. Katz wrote numerous articles and short essays for two decades, in the *Yiddishes Tageblatt*, which are distinguished by vigor of style and logical presentation of arguments. He later became editor of the *Iddisher Courier* in Chicago, and by his editorials and ably conducted column influenced Jewish life in the mid-western communities.

Of the writers who devoted themselves primarily to essays, the most noted is H. Zhitlowski. He excels all others both by the quantity and quality of his writings. During the three decades of his literary activity in the country he wrote hundreds of articles and essays which were later collected in fifteen volumes. These deal with many subjects, questions of the day, aspects of socialistic theory, its relation to nationalism, philosophic problems, literary criticism, and many others. Zhitlowski developed his own theory about Jewish nationalism and the role of Yiddish in the preservation of the Jewish people which was discussed by us above (Sec. 119). Of considerable value are his essays dealing with literary criticism, some of which are the size of small volumes, such as *Iyob*, *Faust*, and several others. In these he displays a wide knowledge of world literature, a sound grounding in the canons of aesthetics and good taste. He also distinguishes himself in his philosophic essays in which he presents abstruse problems in a clear and distinct manner. In general, clarity and logical interpretation of theories and views are among the best qualities of his essays. The weakest phase of his literary activity is his publicistic articles. In his discussions of the questions of the day, there is frequent contradiction as well as recurrent change of policy. He is aware of these incongruities and attempts to justify his shifting from view to view by casuistic and quasi-philosophic methods of which he is a master.

There are also a number of writers who devoted themselves to literary criticism. Of these there are to be noted, besides S. Niger, the leading Yiddish critic whose work was discussed by us above, N. Steinberg, B. Rivkin, and A. Almi (A. H. Sheps). The first devotes himself especially to the characterization of the younger school of Yiddish novelists and poets and in a series of essays collected under the title, *Yung America*, he delineates the personalities of a number of these literati and gives an appreciation of their works. There is little of sound criticism in these essays, and in general, verbosity and euphuistic phrases take the place of principles and canons. This, however, is a trait displayed by many of the younger Yiddish critics. B. Rivkin has a wider view of literature and in his volume, *Die Grundtendenzen Fun Der Yiddisher Literatur In America* (The Fundamental Tendencies of Yiddish Literature in America), he attempts to give a survey of the principal currents in Yiddish literature in this country and an appreciation of its leading writers, and he succeeded to a degree. But he also suffers from the common defect of the younger critics to cover up with words deficiency of thought. Almi who is a prolific writer and whose essays cover a multitude of subjects including even spiritualism, wrote also a large number of brief critical essays in which he touches upon selected characteristics of writers, and frequently also upon traits in personalities with a certain skill and dexterity.

Another essayist who treats in his writings both philosophical and literary subjects is William Nathanson. He set out to popularize philosophy among the Yiddish speaking masses and began with a bulky volume, entitled *Kultur un Zivilizazie* (Culture and Civilization) in which he combats the materialistic view of life prevalent in all socialistic theories, and advocates the primacy of culture which emphasizes the spiritual rather than the utilitarian values. This volume was followed by a translation into Yiddish of Spinoza's Ethics. His works display knowledge and extensive reading of philosophical literature, but suffer from a lack of clearness. From philosophy he turned to literary criticism, and in another bulky volume, *Intelligenz, Kunst, und Kinstler* (Intelligence, Art, and Artists), he endeavored to present a philosophy of belles-lettres. The gist of the theory is that the literary artist sees the world and life intuitively and consequently he expresses not only his emotional reaction but also deep thoughts though he arrives at them not through intellectual reasoning. Moreover, the artist himself may not be even conscious of the thought embodied in his

delineation of the lives and activities of his character. The conclusion is that the critic has a right to interpret the literary works in as free a way as possible and evolve from them ideas which apparently they do not contain. The book is replete with lengthy quotations and excerpts from leading works on philosophy and literature with which the author endeavors to substantiate his theory. A part of it is devoted to an analysis of selected novels of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Roman Roland, and Thomas Mann in the light of his theory. Nathanson is more successful in his volume on literary criticism than in the one on culture and civilization, inasmuch as his ideas are presented with greater clearness.

143. AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

The production of Yiddish literature which, as we have seen, went on in many literary fields, did not pass over that of autobiography and memoirs. Many literati thought it worth while to present to the world a record of the experiences of their lives and of their activities. However, few are of interest to the historian, and of these the noted are *Sechzig Yohr Fun Mein Leben* (Sixty Years of My Life) by I. I. Katzowitz (1859) and *Bletter Fun Mein Leben* (Leaves out of My Life) by Abraham Cahan. The first is primarily an autobiography of the writer from the day of his birth in a Lithuanian village to the year 1919, fourteen years after his final settlement in this country—he made several visits before but returned again to Russia. The canvas of the life is neither wide nor colorful, for the vicissitudes are of the ordinary type of the Russian *Maskil* who began life in an environment of poverty, passed through the *Heder* and the *Yeshibah*, found his way to Haskalah, and later became a Hebrew teacher or an enlightened business man. In the case of our author he was both, and in addition he turned, on his settlement in this country, farmer, and finally editor of a Yiddish farmers' weekly. Yet there is much human interest in it, and the narrative which is devoted primarily to the life in Russia affords the reader glimpses of Jewish conditions both in Lithuania and in southern Russia. It also throws some light on movements in Jewish life, such as that of the first migration to the United States in the early eighties of the last century typically represented by the *Am Olam*, a group of intellectuals who headed this exodus and of which the author was a member. The early phase of the nationalist movement also comes in for its share of reminiscences though in a limited measure. The flowing style in which the work is written and

the fair sequence in which the events and episodes are presented enhance its literary value.

Cahan's memoirs—in five volumes—are devoted primarily to his life and activity in this country during a period close to four decades (1882-1914). *The Leaves* are of great interest to the historian of American Jewish life, for as we noted, Cahan occupied a leading place in the Jewish labor movement, of which he was one of the principal organizers, and as editor of *Der Forverts*, the organ of that movement and the socialistically-minded masses he was in touch with all important events in Jewish life, whether of a particular or general nature. The memoirs, therefore, shed much light on many phases of Jewish life, political, economic, cultural, and literary. We observe the gradual development of trade unions among the Jews from small beginnings to powerful organizations, the spread of socialism among the working masses, and what is more, the metamorphosis of that idea from its phase of rabid radicalism to a milder and quieter type. We note the entry of Jewish labor and socialist organizations into politics and their participation in general Jewish movements and activities. Yiddish literary productivity and the Yiddish theatre occupy important places in the reminiscences, for both were closely connected with the laboring masses who were their chief supporters. Besides, numerous other events are reflected in the work, and a multitude of data bearing on important episodes in recent Jewish history in this country and abroad are supplied from the rich treasury of reminiscences of an editor of a daily newspaper for decades. In general, there is reflected in these volumes a fair cross-section of American Jewish life in its process of adjustment to new conditions. Of interest is the change in the tempo of Jewish socialism, especially in its attitude towards religion and tradition. In its early stage, it was anti-religious and attacks against what was called fanaticism and clericalism were frequent and rabid. Gradually the ardor cooled off, and on the 13th of April 1911 there appeared in *Der Forverts* an article by the editor himself in which he permitted socialists and radicals to arrange and participate in the Seder ceremony on the first night of Passover. At the time it was an event and precipitated a literary debate in the columns of that daily. Today it would have been a curiosity.

Of importance is also the part devoted to the unfortunately famous Frank case in Atlanta which began in 1913 and ended with his tragic death by lynching in 1915. Cahan tells the story of this tragedy in

great detail and in all its phases. As such his description is an historical document. However, what was said about the content cannot be said about the form. On the whole, the memoirs are given more in the form of a chronicle than a well organized narrative and are interspersed with long excerpts from articles, reports, and editorials from *Der Forverts* and other periodicals. The value of and interest in the work are, though, little affected by these shortcomings.

Of historical value are also the *Memoirs* of Zebi Hirsh Masliansky (1858). He began his career as a speaker in Russia in 1888 and was one of the few *Maggidim* or *Matifim* as the more modern preachers, who made the nationalist ideal the main theme of their speeches, called themselves at the time. Being endowed with oratorical ability and possessing both Jewish and secular knowledge which he utilized with great skill, he was very popular among the Jewish masses. For a number of years he traveled through the length and breadth of the Pale of Settlement visiting every community of importance, arousing his brethren to action on behalf of the colonization of Palestine. However, his popularity aroused the suspicions of the Russian government, and in 1895 he was exiled from Russia and he settled in this country. For a number of years he continued to act as itinerant preacher and propagandist also here, and made frequent trips to the leading communities. He later settled in New York where he was engaged as a preacher and for a time was also a publisher of a Yiddish daily, *Die Yiddishe Welt*. As a result, there are reflected in his *Memoirs* all the important vicissitudes, events, and episodes which took place in Jewish life both in Russian and American Jewries during a period of forty years. Of special significance are the chapters which tell of his visits in the Russian Jewish communities during the early nineties, for not only do they illuminate certain phases of the life and activity of Russian Jewry in those years, but they contain numerous data upon the lives of many outstanding men in various fields who helped make Jewish history. The author, on account of his popularity, mingled in all circles of Jewish society and came in contact with all types of Jewish representatives from the extreme right to the most liberal, and his record of impressions and the experiences he gained of such contacts embellishes the picture of many an East-European Jewish leader. A number of his anecdotes illustrate the attitude of the Czarist regime toward the Jews as well as its general corruption and incapacity. One of the anecdotes deserves to be cited. Masliansky, as said, was looked upon with

suspicion by the Russian government. He therefore often had difficulty in obtaining permission to speak in the synagogues and at times he was arrested or sent out of the city after a few days. When he came to the city of Mitau and on paying his visit to the chief of police, that dignitary did not threaten him with arrest nor did he limit his stay in the city, but calmly told the speaker that he will have to divide with him the income derived from the speeches. Masliansky complied and for a number of days a policeman attended the meetings at the synagogue and scrupulously watched every penny thrown into the plate—passing the plate was the usual mode of compensation for itinerant speakers no matter how famous they were—and then took one half for his chief leaving the other half for the orator.

Of interest are also the chapters dealing with American Jewish life in the late nineties of the last century and the first decade of the present. Many an anecdote, a fact, and story contribute to a better understanding of recent Jewish history in this country. There is in the reminiscences a strong personal note and an unconscious effort to emphasize the importance of the activities of the narrator, but this should be expected from a writer of personal memoirs and by no means detracts from the value of the work.

CHAPTER XV

HEBREW LITERATURE

144. THE FIRST PERIOD

The history of Hebrew literature produced in this country, like that of the Yiddish, is divided into two periods, the first dating from 1871 when Zebi Hirsch Bernstein (1845-1907) began to publish the Hebrew weekly, the *ha-Zofeh be-Erez ha-Hadashah* (The Observer in the New Land) to 1905, and the second, from that date to the present. The earlier period is marked by a bitter struggle on the part of the few scattered Hebraists to transplant the Hebrew culture and literature which they knew and cherished in the lands whence they came into a totally new environment that was, due to the circumstances in which the early immigrants found themselves, very unfavorable for such an attempt.

As noted above, the severe struggle for existence which these immigrants had to carry on during that period prevented them from developing considerable literary activity in any language. But while Yiddish literature from the beginning of the eighties of the last century filled a certain need in the lives of the masses, there was no demand for Hebrew even on the part of the classes, for in fact there were no classes in immigrant Jewry. In reality, there was a large number of potential Hebrew readers in this country even during that time, for the large waves of migration brought over numerous *Maskilim* and others who were conversant with Hebrew, but the severe process of adjustment deadened all interest in cultural matters. It remained then for the small number of idealists, some of whom were teachers or Hebrew writers to cultivate an ancient language. These exerted themselves to the utmost and were not daunted by obstacles and failures. In thirty years there appeared not less than twenty Hebrew periodicals, eight or nine weeklies, and about twelve monthlies. All of them were short-lived, some of the monthlies appearing only once. The longest-lived of these was the *ha-Ibri* among the weeklies, published by K. Sarasohn, owner of the *Yiddishes Tageblatt*, and edited by G. Rosenzweig, which appeared for

ten years (1892-1902), though irregularly and at intervals, and the *Ner Ma'arabi* among the monthlies, appearing for about a year and a half (1895-1896). This comparatively considerable number of periodicals testifies to continued exertion and activity on the part of the few lovers of Hebrew. The results, however, were meager. As late as the year 1898, S. B. Schwartzberg, an indefatigable worker in the field, poured forth a bitter complaint against "the people of the Book" for their indifference to Hebrew and its literature in a brochure which he entitled *Tikoteb zot le-Dor Aharon* (Let It Be Written Down for Future Generations) in which he draws a dark picture of the state of Hebrew culture and literature in this country. From it we learn that only twenty-two copies of the one Hebrew monthly, *Ner Ma'arabi*, were sold in the Jewish community of Pittsburgh after four weeks of salesmanship and less than that in Baltimore, while the number of Jews in those cities numbered even at that time in the tens of thousands. Furthermore, the income of that monthly, both from subscribers and advertisements during seven months—almost half of the period of its existence—reached the grand total of five hundred and fourteen dollars.

Such circumstances were, of course, not conducive to the development of a literature in its various phases. In addition, there were other factors which contributed to the rather low quality of that literature, the chief of which were the writers themselves. Most of these left the East-European countries from which they hailed during the heyday of the second Haskalah period, when ornate writing and mastery of Biblical phraseology were considered qualifications for admission to literature and covered many a flaw in content. On coming to this country they neglected to further develop whatever literary talent they possessed, and being isolated from the main current of Hebrew literature in Russia, they continued to spin occasionally the thread they began in their youth. The would-be poets sang of wisdom, of nature, of Jewish suffering, of America and freedom, in good Biblical phrases and in rhyme, but with little poetic skill. The few singers, such as M. M. Dolitzki and H. N. Imber (Sec. 27), who possessed poetic talent were overwhelmed by their environment and their Muse was silenced, and only on occasion penned a poem or two which excelled those of the others. The publicists wrote articles and essays on many questions in the same old way in many words with little analysis and sound judgment. The greater part of the periodicals which were almost the only medium of literary expression was, however, devoted to scholarly or semi-scholarly articles,

containing as in the days of the early Haskalah period remarks on difficult passages in the Bible, grammatical notes, or discussions of philological and historical character.

From time to time there appeared in the columns of these periodicals a short story written by one of the literati who considered himself a writer of fiction. Most of these stories, though, display little ability and skill, let alone art. In general, fiction was the weakest phase of the Hebrew literary activity of the early period.

Of the leading writers of this period there are to be mentioned the poets, Isaac Rabinowitz (1847-1900), M. M. Dolitzki, H. N. Imber, Jacob Sobel (1831-1913), M. M. Gerson (1861-1895), and Gershom Rosenzweig (1861-1914); the publicists, essayists, and scholars, A. D. Dubsewitz (1844-1899), E. Deinard (b. 1846), Zeeb Wolf Schur (1844-1910), M. D. Radkinson (1845-1904), M. Reicherson (1897-1903), S. B. Schwartzberg, A. H. Rosenberg (1838-1920), J. D. Eisenstein (b. 1854), I. Davidson (1870-1939), and M. Raisin (1880). Most of these writers began their literary careers in Russia and continued their activity in this country sporadically. Rosenberg, Eisenstein, Davidson, and Raisin made their debut here in the columns of the periodicals of the earlier period, while their real literary activity belongs to the second period, and several of these made, as will be seen, important contributions to Hebrew literature and Jewish learning.

Surveying the literary productivity of the period under discussion as a whole, we can say that it left little of permanent value and that its importance consists primarily in the fact that it kept the light of Hebrew culture and literature burning, preserved it for a later generation, and prepared the ground for the more flourishing and creative activity of the second period.

We cannot conclude our account of this period, however, without singling out one writer whose works have permanent literary value. That writer is Gershom Rosenzweig who excelled as a poetic epigrammatist. Epigrams are not a new feature in Hebrew literature. The Mediaeval poets, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Judah Al-Harisi, and especially Immanuel of Rome (Vol. I, Secs. 127, 128; Vol. II, Sec. 30), were all masters of this art. But modern Hebrew poetry displayed little skill in it. With the exception of J. L. Gordon who at times penned a pointed epigram, the other poets hardly attempted it. Rosenzweig specialized in this art. His collection, *Hamishah we-Elef* (One Thousand and Five), named after the number of epigrams in it, is distinguished both by quan-

tity and quality. The epigrams are endowed with the necessary attributes of this type of poetic expression, namely brevity, skilful manipulation of the language, and keen humor. The Hebrew language with its native economy of speech, large numbers of words of ambiguous meaning, and especially with the power of precision given to it by the prophets and the Psalmist of old is well fitted to be a vehicle of such type of poetry. In addition, the extensive ramified and manifold literature of the ages affords a wealth of material for the poetic humorist to draw upon. Rosenzweig utilized in his epigrams all the means and devices afforded both by the literature and the language. His excellence consists in the artistic use of Biblical verses, Agadic maxims, and well known *bon mots* as part of epigrams and his endowing them with various nuances which express the keen humor presented by modern Jewish life and its conditions. The epigrams satirize the weakness of human nature in general, and the defects in Jewish life, especially American Jewish life, in particular. The most frequent targets of the witticisms are women, misers, physicians, lawyers, the neglected state of Jewish education, the Reform movement, and certain glaring faults in American Jewish life, such as political corruption, rampant ignorance of Judaism, greed and the worship of Mammon, and similar matters.

The point of the witticism of most of the epigrams is their form—the Hebrew puns and the dexterous manipulation of phrases and verses—and consequently cannot be translated. In a large number, though, the humor is expressed more in the situation than in the words and a few of those epigrams deserve to be quoted. On wisdom: “Wisdom uttereth her voice in the street (Prov. I, 20) not by choice but by necessity, for often the owner cannot pay his rent.” “Ignorant men go first and wise men follow, for thus is the law of yore, horses precede the masters.” To a miser: “Thy hand is not only closed but locked, for even thou hast lost the key.” On inconstancy of friendship: “Alas, I lost a dear friend. Did he die? Nay, he became rich.” On a mother-in-law: “Were Adam to have had a mother-in-law there would have been no need for the Cherubim and flaming sword barring his way to paradise. He would have lost all desire to return.” Such is the sparkling wit of our poet and the brilliance of his thoughts. The epigrams can, however, not be fully appreciated unless they are read in the original for the swinging rhyme and the linguistic pun enhance their value greatly. Rosenzweig’s collection is a real contribution to the particularly meager phase of modern Hebrew poetry, the epigrammatic.

145. THE SECOND PERIOD

The changes which took place in the life of American Jewry from the year 1905 initiated a new epoch in the development of Hebrew literature. The new wave of immigrants contained a considerable number of Hebraists and among them many younger men and women who were not only acquainted with the Hebrew literature of the period but were also imbued with its spirit and considered its development a necessary condition for the preservation of Judaism. There were also among the arrivals a few who had already made their literary debut in the European countries from which they came. It did not take long and the younger lovers of Hebrew became the leaders in whatever Hebrew movement there was in this country. New periodicals stamped with the impress of the spirit of the literature of the day began to be published in which not only those writers whose names were already known found place for expression, but also new names began to appear. These periodicals were short-lived like their predecessors, but the new generation of Hebraists, though limited in number, were indefatigable in their efforts to strike root in the new soil. They were helped in their endeavors by the spread of the Zionist movement which theoretically, at least, acknowledged the revival of Hebrew to be an important part of its activity and by the improvements made in the methods and system of Jewish education in this country which included also the adoption by a large number of schools of the natural or the *Ibrit be-Ibrit* method of teaching Hebrew. This method, though greatly limited in its success, helped to raise a number of American young men and women as readers of Hebrew.

The movement was also strengthened by the contact it established with the literary centers in the East-European countries and after the World War with that of Palestine. Famous Hebrew writers and leaders of Jewish culture made frequent visits to this country and urged the Jews of America to cultivate their ancient language and help develop its literature. Their words did not always fall on willing ears but contributed to a degree towards stabilizing somewhat the position of Hebrew in American Jewish life.

The effect of the operation of all these factors was that the Hebrew movement, though far from popular, succeeded in carrying on its activities in a fairly regular manner. Its leading organ, the *ha-Doar*, has been appearing without interruption for nineteen years. During the last

two decades there were published also several monthlies, each of which left a literary deposit, and the result is the production of a considerable literature in all its phases.

The general characteristics of this literature resemble to a great degree those of the Hebrew literature of the period. The belles-lettres are distinguished by the excessive share of poetic productions, and its fiction reflects the contemporary Jewish life to a limited degree and American conditions still less. The writers, whether from inability or because the Jewish environment in this country is too dynamic and has not assumed definite form, turned to themes taken from East-European Jewish life of the recent past or went even further and produced historical novels. Only few attempted to portray the pulsating and fast moving life around them with more or less skill. Publicistic articles and essays form an important part of this literature. These are distinguished by their quantity and quality, and especially by the fact that a number of the contributors to this branch of literature made their debut as writers in this country. The American Hebrew literature, as a whole, is imbued with the spirit of Jewish nationalism and its aspirations and ideals found in it their full expression. With these preliminary remarks we will proceed to survey the various phases of this literature.

146. HEBREW FICTION

American Hebrew fiction began, like the European, with short stories and sketches, but under the influence of European and Palestinian tendencies, there soon began to appear short and long novels. This phase of belles-lettres, however, did not flourish in abundance, and the number of short story writers and novelists is not impressive. Of the more important writers of fiction there are to be noted Abraham Shoar (1869-1939), S. L. Blank, S. Halkin, Y. Twersky, H. Sackler and Mordecai Katz.

i. Shoar arrived in this country at an age when he could not possibly adjust himself to new conditions, nor even feel or understand the tempo and character of American life. He spent the remainder of his life in the New York ghetto, and when his narrative skill clamored for expression, volens nolens he turned to the world he knew best, that of the town in the Pale of Settlement. His two-volume collection of stories entitled *Dor Holek* (A Generation That Passes) is almost fully described by the title, for with the exception of one story from American Jewish life, all others portray the life of the "town." Almost a third of

the stories have as their themes episodes in the lives of veterans of the army of Czar Nicholas the First or "cantonists" as they were called. These cantonists were seized in their childhood, distributed as menial servants among families of peasants until they reached the age of eighteen and then served as soldiers in the army for twenty-five years. Many of these youngsters were converted and rose to high office, remembering but dimly their past; but others suffered greatly for their religion, and at the end of their term of service returned, broken in body and spirit, to their native towns where they found great difficulty in adjusting themselves to a life long forgotten. The lives of these martyrs were rich in dramatic and emotional experiences but were little utilized by Hebrew fiction writers. J. Steinberg (Sec. 9) was the first to turn his attention to the quaint life, and Shoar was the second of this group. The two outstanding stories of this type are *Benjamin Pinchas* and *Yeno Shel Eliyahu* (The Wine of Elijah). In the first, the author depicts very skilfully the dualism in the soul of the veteran, Benjamin Pinchas, who returned to his home town after service and became very pious to atone for his sins. He engages in the humble occupation of a chimney sweep by day and is a shoemaker at night. The last he does not for gain for he repairs the shoes of the poor children gratis. His conduct is exemplary and his piety unimpeachable. But when he sits down at his last at night, there arise before him scenes of his old life and he hums quietly Russian songs which remind him of wide steppes and roaming horses and which are tinged with a longing for a life gone by. One night the veteran relates to the author the story of his life, his struggles for his religion and faith against the charms and temptations of a young Cossack girl who loved him and whose love he returned. The God of Israel conquered but a wound remained in the heart of the veteran, the pain of which he assuages nightly by the humming of the old songs of the Don Steppes which he follows with the reciting of the Psalms of David.

The second portrays a Seder night in the home of the modern Marranos, a group of Jewish converts in the Czarist capital, St. Petersburg. The leading figure of this group which consisted mainly of famous professionals who had changed their religion through force of circumstances was the Rear-Admiral, Michael Michaelowitz, one of the "cantonists" who did not withstand the tortures in the barracks and embraced Christianity. The Seder night was his only memento of the Jewish past. On that night he recited the *Kaddish* in memory of a

youthful friend who had died a martyr's death on the night of Passover. Michael depicts the death-bed scene of the young martyr who saw Elijah in a vision and who told his friend before he closed his eyes forever that the wine which fills the cup of Elijah is filled with the tears shed by sufferers in moments of anguish. It is this phrase which engraved itself on the mind of the young cantonist, and while externally he lived as a pious Christian, he observed the Seder night and the *Kaddish*.

Several sketches portray scenes of past Jewish life while other stories deal with themes of modern life. The triangle motive is not missing either, and the following erotic episode is well portrayed. It is the struggle in the heart of a woman who in her childhood had loved her playmate, David, who later became a driver. She was of a higher station in life and she married another, a scholar. All went well for some time, but when her husband fell sick her lover began to pursue her and her love awakened. She struggled long and ultimately yielded to her love. The end is tragic, for the husband dies when he learns of his wife's faithlessness.

The only story of American life is that of a Jewish ghetto boy who was a student of the *Yeshibah* but whose life was distorted by a tragedy, the tragedy of many a ghetto home in the early days when poverty disrupted family life. His mother left home because she could not stand the poverty and followed the boarder who pursued her with his love. The boy winces under the blow, forsakes the *Yeshibah* and enters the school of life's hard experiences. He becomes a newsboy and the life of the street has many pitfalls and while he struggles hard to withstand its allurements he finally stumbles. He is conscious of his fall and he cries for his lost world—the world of innocence and purity. "But, who knows," says the author, "perhaps these tears are his last." Shoar possesses fine narrative skill and to a degree psychological insight.

ii. S. L. Blank is a prolific writer and has to his credit several novels and a number of short stories. His themes are taken primarily from the life of the Jews of Bessarabia from which province he hails. The Jews of Bessarabia, the fertile province of southern Russia, represented a distinct type of pre-War Russian Jewry. They were, on the whole, simple, good-natured, of cheerful disposition, and inclined to taste of the pleasures of this world. Learning, though not unknown among them, was the share of the few, while the great majority, who consisted of hard working people, took their Judaism naturally, were pious and

observant, but were not oppressed by the rigor and burden of the law. A large number of the Bessarabian Jews settled, in the seventies and early eighties of the last century, on the land and engaged in agriculture. The fertile black soil of the Moldavian prairie rewarded them with its fruitfulness and some of them waxed rich through their hard labor, thrift, and endurance. It was thus that several Jewish villages or colonies ultimately came into being. It is the story of one of these colonies, Budeshti, and the life and struggle and the ultimate triumph of the Jewish farmers which Blank undertook to tell in great detail and with considerable narrative skill in his trilogy, *Zon* (Sheep), *Adamah* (Earth), and *Moshabah* (Colony).

The principal character of the three novels is a man named Boaz and the first novel is devoted entirely to him. Boaz was an orphan raised among the Moldavian peasants in a village, and in his youth lived the life of the village participating in its joys and in the hilarities of the young men and women, possessing but faint knowledge of Judaism. He falls in love with Rachel, a simple Jewish village girl, untutored like himself, but of good character, marries her, and starts out life as a sheep-raiser on the prairie. His marriage marks a complete change in his life. Boaz is torn away from the Moldavian environment and is brought in closer contact with Jews and Judaism. He has henceforth two tasks before him—to prosper and to become a better Jew: In *Zon*, the author relates the vicissitudes Boaz undergoes in both directions. With idyllic charm the author tells of the various steps on his way to prosperity. His initial flock of five lambs multiplies, more land is leased, and through the hard labor of both husband and wife, wealth begins to accumulate, buildings begin to rise, and a well-appointed farm takes the place of the hut in which the couple began their life. The second task—to become a better Jew—proceeds more slowly. Boaz cannot read the prayers but he possesses native piety, and he endeavors to the best of his ability to atone for the sins of his youth. He is helped by the Rabbi of the nearest town to whom he tells his plight, and the latter assures him that God will accept his prayers though they consist only of brief thanks in the Moldavian language. The novel concludes with the episode of the birth of a daughter.

Adamah continues the story of Boaz and Rachel, but the canvas widens. More Jews settle on the prairie, former dwellers of the near-by towns, hucksters and peddlers. They attempt to strike root in the soil;

Boaz helps them and they gradually succeed. These Jews, though not learned, are more conversant with the ways of Judaism than Boaz, yet they look up to him for he continues to prosper and by his generosity he becomes the patron and guide of the new dwellers. More children are born to Boaz as well as to the new settlers, and ultimately a teacher and *Shohet* settle in the near-by village and spiritual life begins to throb among the little group of farmers. Years pass, Boaz waxes richer, but his good nature and simplicity of character do not change. He continually makes efforts to become a better Jew though he still cannot read the prayers. He pays the larger part of the teacher's salary, buys a Scroll of the Law for the group, and finally marries his oldest daughter to a learned man whom he endows with a rich farm and a mill as a source of income.

The third part continues the story, but this time the narrative embraces more and more the vicissitudes of the other characters and it becomes the story of a group. More Jews whom Boaz helps and guides settle there, but a rainy year jeopardizes the entire settlement and for a moment it is in danger of extinction. The danger, however, passes and the colony prospers, and with the building of a synagogue of which Boaz is the principal contributor, the author concludes his narrative of the colony, Budeshti, which began with a single Jew who possessed only five lambs, a hut, and a young wife.

There are no depths nor heights in the trilogy, for Blank is primarily a narrator and troubles himself little with psychological analysis. His characters, though, are well drawn and the sequence of events is smooth and his descriptions of the life on the prairie as well as of nature possess charm and naturalness. The trilogy, as a whole, is a contribution to Hebrew fiction, for it not only depicts a little known corner of Jewish life of the past, but what is more, in the character of Boaz it reveals to us the child-like piety of the simple peasant Jew and his great reverence for learning, though he himself was ignorant and illiterate. Boaz strives all his life to please God and to distinguish himself as a Jew.

Of lesser value is his novel, *Mister Kunis*, which deals partly with American life. It tells of the deeds of a character of the Jewish underworld in a Bessarabian town who fled from justice and came to this country where he continued his nefarious deeds, but was finally regenerated by his love for an immigrant girl who by her purity of character awakened in him whatever good there was left in his heart. The novel

bears all the earmarks of the commonplace popular novel of the type prevalent in Yiddish fiction. Blank is to be judged primarily by his trilogy.

iii. S. Halkin's novel, *Yehiel ha-Hagri*, is a problem novel, but in reality it is more problem than novel, for there is little plot and the bulk of it consists of monologues and soliloquies of a semi-philosophical and mystical character. The problem is not new; it is the old struggle between God and Satan in the heart of man, or between the desire for goodness and purity of soul and passion or eroticism. The story begins in *medias res*. We meet the principal character, Yehiel, musing and soliloquizing about his search for God and praying for a revelation. The God he searches for is not the God of tradition but a mixture of modern notions and Hassidic mysticism, one who is the essence of life, is revealed in all phenomena, a God who is supposed to elevate man above his passions and at the same time sanctify them. We are told little about Yehiel, his education, family, or environment. Only later do we learn in a line or two that he studied Talmud and attended the University and that he is entangled in an affair with a woman named Lorraine of whose character we are not informed except that she loves him while he is attracted to her only physically. He struggles against that passion, leaves her but returns again. Meanwhile, a third character rises on the scene, Ruth, who resembles Yehiel in her struggle and who speaks his language. She, too, is in search of pure love and thinks she has found it in Yehiel, but meanwhile she keeps continually falling lower and lower. Finally, there appears also a fourth character, Rabbi Dob, a mystic, who soliloquizes about the Infinite God who reveals Himself in all manifestations of life, and the way to find Him. Yehiel attaches himself to Rabbi Dob hoping to learn through him the way to purity of life and soul, but in vain. There follows a series of struggles on the part of Ruth to retain Yehiel's love; he, on the other hand, attempts to escape her wiles but does not succeed. He pursues Ruth; she, however, forsakes him when she discovers his true feelings, though she loves him. Rabbi Dob dies muttering about God and life; and Yehiel who was present at the death of his teacher remains as perplexed as ever.

There are, as said, numerous long passages in the novel containing reflections on God, the hidden and the revealed phases of life, the search for truth, purity, calmness of soul, and kindred matters which make us pause and think. We place Halkin's novel to the credit of

American Hebrew literature for the characters and the writer live in New York. However, there is little of local color in it. The theme, the description of the struggle between religion and passion is not new either in Hebrew or Yiddish literature. The novel, as a whole, is a worthy attempt on the part of our writer to deal with the deeper aspects of the human personality.

iv. The field of Yoḥanan Twersky is the biographical and historical novel. He undertook to present the lives of several famous men of the present and of the past in fictional form. Several of these attempts are not completed and are still being published as a serial in various periodicals. The only novel which is in a comparatively complete form is Uriel Acosta in three volumes. Twersky undertakes in this story to delineate the life of this spiritual rebel and his tragic struggle for truth, as he saw it, with exceeding detail. The first two volumes are devoted to Acosta's childhood, adolescence, youth, and the first stage of manhood which were passed in Portugal, and the third to a part of his life in Holland in which the first stage of his rebellion against Rabbinic Judaism is presented. It is quite evident that even this novel is not completed, for the tragic incidents in his life, his excommunication, subsequent recantation, and finally his suicide are not touched upon. Yet the work possesses sufficient merit to be considered an important contribution to Hebrew fiction. The writer is well equipped for his task for he displays extensive knowledge of the life of the seventeenth century Spain and Holland and possesses a fertile imagination to revivify the past and even enter into the spirit of the age. The numerous scenes he passes before us of the general life in Portugal and later of that of the Jews in Amsterdam are drawn with a masterly hand, and the reader is carried away to the time and place of action.

There is, though, one great defect in Twersky's narrative and that is the excessive care lavished by him on the delineation of the environment. The copiousness with which he draws every phase in the environment of his hero, often a quite irrelevant one, overshadows the main purpose of the work, namely the delineation of the development of his character. He devotes page upon page to street scenes, to a bull fight, to the life of the students at the University of Coimbra, and numerous other episodes. We miss, though, the first steps of the inner struggle of Acosta for truth, the awakening of doubt in his heart in the veracity of the dogmas of Christianity which made him turn to Judaism.

It seems that our novelist is primarily interested in the resuscitation of

the life and environment of a historical period rather than in the psychological analysis of the personality of the subject of the biography. In this task he succeeded well for he draws the past life with skill and art on a scale hitherto unknown in Hebrew literature.

v. H. Sackler, who made his debut as writer in Hebrew, soon turned to Yiddish and to the Anglo-Jewish literatures in both of which he achieved distinction, in the former as a dramatist, and in the latter as an historical novelist. However, he did not forget his first love, and from time to time he contributes a short story or a sketch to various publications. The themes of these stories are either historical episodes or some exotic incidents in Jewish life of the near past which he portrays with vividness and historic insight. His style is frequently embellished with euphuistic expressions and possesses a poetic tinge.

vi. Mordecai Katz began his literary career while yet in Russia where he contributed articles and short stories to various Hebrew periodicals. He continued his literary Hebrew activity in this country and published in the weekly, *ha-Ibri*, and the daily, *ha-Doar*, a considerable number of sketches and short stories among which is also the series entitled *mi-Pinkasi ha-Adom* (From My Red Note-book). This series contains portrayals of episodes in Jewish life in Russia during the turbulent days of the World War and the Revolution. The story, *Rab she-Horag* is of special merit. In this story, Katz describes with great skill the state of mind of a Jewish Rabbi of extreme piety who was drafted in the army, and who killed an enemy soldier in one of the engagements. And while lying in the hospital suffering from serious wounds received in battle he reflects not upon his own state but upon the horror of having committed murder. His soul shudders at the thought that he transgressed one of the Ten Commandments and that his hand had taken a human life. The vivid description of the psychological crisis in the Rabbi's mind is very impressive.

147. HEBREW POETRY

Hebrew poetry fared much better than fiction in this country; it excels the former both in quantity and quality. Not only did there arise, during the last three decades, a considerable number of young bards, most of whom made their debut in this country, who produced a large quantity of poems, but some of these singers soared high in their poetic flight, and they can compare favorably with many a European or Palestinian poet. These young poets who came late in the field un-

doubtedly profited by the remarkable development of Hebrew poetry during the first two decades of this century in the centers across the sea. It was the wealth of expression, the manifold of nuances, the imagery of diction, the vigorous tone introduced into Hebrew poetry by Bialik, Tschernichowski, Shencor, and others which greatly influenced the style and manner of their poems. Similarly, the themes, motives, attitudes to life and to the world of the older poets became an integral part of the content of the productions of the American bards, and as a result, we can note in their songs a strain of slightly conscious and largely unconscious imitation. Yet with all this, American Hebrew poetry is not devoid of originality and the talented singers each contributed a note of their own.

Due to the fact that the American Hebrew poets were in close touch with the general currents of Hebrew poetry, and as stated, were under the influence of its leading bards, it is difficult for the surveyor of this branch of literature to delineate its particular characteristics. On the whole, the poets follow the general patterns and tread the path marked out by their predecessors. They, as a matter of course, sing of love, nature, and life. Nor are themes taken from Jewish life, expressing the woes and hopes of the people, absent, but there is no specialization, no devotion to any of these fields, and consequently no deepening of its content nor widening of its confines. The originality consists primarily in the individualistic expression of these poetic patterns, and to a large degree in the form. In general, form, which plays an important role in poetry, plays a still greater role in the productions of these American poets. They mastered the Hebrew language in all its phases and nuances as well as the poetic technique, both of which they manipulate quite dexterously, and as a result, there is beauty in their poems, beauty of expression, rhyme, and rhythm which affords us aesthetic pleasure, though frequently we are not moved or stirred by the content. Only occasionally does the lyre of one of these singers strike a chord which finds an echo in our hearts and emits tones possessing inner and spiritual beauty.

There is, however, one outstanding characteristic of this poetry and that is its lyricism. Lyricism, as we know, is a fundamental trait of the Jewish poetic genius in general, but it is more dominant in the American Hebrew poetry, for though the singers are permeated by the national spirit and from time to time deal with themes of national import, it is the lyric strain which impresses the greater part of their

poems. Several poets, though, tried their hand at the creation of epics. Strangely enough, these are not of Jewish but of Indian life. It is possible that by turning to Indian myths and legends, these bards wanted to display the influence of the American environment upon their poetry, but one may surmise that the employment and recasting of prepared material is easier than creating it anew as would have been the case were they to write a Jewish epic. These epics as well as several narrative poems of American Jewish life essayed by one of the singers supply the local color to the poetry produced in this country. We will now review briefly the productions of the outstanding Hebrew poets in this country.

i. The first poet deserving that name is Benjamin Naḥum Silkiner (1888-1934). He did not produce much during his rather short life and the poetic heritage he left consists of a single volume of poems published posthumously in 1927 which includes also his epic published previously. Yet his songs are distinguished by a lyrical tone distinctly his own. He himself correctly characterizes the expressions of his Muse by calling them in the opening poem "luminous strands scattered to all sides," for they are only single strands which form no continuous web, yet they possess light, not the bright light which blinds us by its flash, but the kind which brings repose and quiets the turbulent soul. His song is the song of a soul which, though bent under the burden of life yet is not overwhelmed by it, but, on the contrary, sees the bright side of life and is, as he says in his poem, *Arbit*, thankful for the good and sweetness it received. This spirit of wistfulness tempered by optimism is evident in all of Silkiner's poems. In his love poems the leading motive is the joy it bestowed upon him during the happy moments. In his nature poems there is little description of the beauty of nature, but he sings more of the effect of the states of nature on his own soul. A quiet moonlit night pacifies his heart; the end of the summer reminds him of passing hopes; and the storm calls forth sympathy for the mighty trees of the forest which do not bend but are broken by its fury. Silkiner penned also a few national poems on Bar Kokba, Herzl, and Palestine which are distinguished by a delicate lyricism. This singer possessed potential poetic ability which regrettably was not realized, and this is evident from the several fragments of larger narrative poems which were left unfinished and of which the *Agadat ha-Zelillim* (The Legend of the Tones) is the best.

Its theme, the fate of the song of the poet, is dressed in the garb of

the following legend. Long ago, when the world had just issued from the hands of the Creator, there was no joy in life and all creatures felt that something was missing in the well-ordered universe. They pleaded to God and He sent the poet whom He endowed with a beautiful soul to infuse gladness into the world. The emissary wandered far and wide and sang. The tones of his song spread joy and gladness. But when years passed and the poet became old, he pleaded to God for return to heaven, the source of his soul. He was told that his request would be granted on condition that he gather the tones scattered through the many years so that they be turned over to another soul. Forth went the poet on his quest, but while forest, hill, and dale returned the tones, the human heart did not, for their sweetness was lost when the heart changed; and thus the soul of the poet is still mourning the loss of its exquisite tone which died in the human heart. The moral enfolded is simple; nature can always return what the poet has given to her while man cannot, for some of the glorious moments in life are lost forever—a fine thought enhanced by the beautiful form in which it is expressed.

The epic entitled *Mul Ohel Timura* (Opposite the Tent of Timura) was the first attempt by a Hebrew poet to recast the Indian legends into epic form. The theme is the struggle of an Indian tribe to maintain its peaceful existence in face of the overwhelming forces of the conquering Spaniards as well as the deeds of its hero and his tragic end. There is fine description and much pathos but the tragedy of the dying tribe is not revealed to us in its depth. It was, however, an accomplishment, for both the content and form were new to Hebrew poets.

ii. Another poet who began to sing about the same time as Silkner is Ephraim Lisitzki (1885). He is the most prolific and versatile of all American Hebrew poets. He has to his credit several volumes and there is hardly a form of poetic expression from the short lyrical to the long epical poem that he did not try his hand at. In addition he is endowed with mastery of language and technique and excels in form. Due to all this, the nature of his poetry eludes characterization. Moreover, Lisitzki, more than any other American poet fell under the influence of the outstanding Hebrew bards of the period, Bialik, Tschernichowski, and Sheneor, and there are evident traces of unconscious imitation in his songs. As a result, the poems, especially the lyrical, are of the pattern type and possess little individuality. The motives of the *Weltschmerz*, namely the predominance of sorrow in the world which

is aggravated by the Jewish tragedy, the passing of youth and the loss of its innocence, the fading of bright dreams, the loneliness of a feeling soul in a world of strife—all these which were current in the Hebrew poetry of the period are frequently recurrent themes of his lyrics. At other times, he echoes the cry for life, the spirit of rebellion against tradition, the oppressive ancestral heritage which burdens the soul of the young, and the restless search for the new standards and goals—all of which were heard and expressed before by Tschernichowski, Sheneor, and others in poetry and by Berdichewski in prose. However, Lisitzki is not a mere imitator and always adds a note of his own, and what is more, the beautiful form in which he expresses these pattern motives reveals to us these emotions in a new light which moves, and at times, even stirs our souls.

His love poems are vivid and are permeated with a spirit of beauty, and at times with deep pathos, when the theme, as with many Hebrew poets, is lost love. But there is an evident note of artificiality as he himself says, "My beloved is a mere fable and a vision and nightly do I weave her image out of strands of dreams of beauty." He fares better in his nature poems. The power of description with which he is endowed, the richness of language, the numerous nuances of expression enable him to depict the colors and tints of the various manifestations of nature in all hours of the day and seasons in a masterful manner. The note of wistfulness so common in Hebrew poetry is felt in our bard's nature songs as he injects his own feeling of sorrow into surrounding nature. There is also a note of local color in a number of his nature poems which portray the landscape of the South. However, in these poems, Lisitzki does not escape the influence of his great predecessors. Thus, we note in one of his fine nature poems, *Horshah* (Forest), a trace of the influence of Bialik's *Berekah* (Well).

Lisitzki is at his best in the narrative poem which has as its theme either a legend of the past or episodes of American Jewish life. Of the former there are to be noted '*Al Hof Niagara* (On the Shores of Niagara) and *Btulat ha-Ashdot* (The Maiden of the Falls) in which Indian legends, a description of the rites of the natives, framed by a portrayal of the majesty of the Niagara Falls are presented in a charming manner. Of the latter, the poems, *bi-Tekoa Shofar* (The Sounding of the Shofar) and *Yeheskel Hazak* tell in detail episodes in the lives of immigrant Jews, their adjustment to a new environment, and the struggle in their souls between the old and the new in a manner which

raises the daily events to poetic level. Lisitzki is the only Hebrew poet in this country in whose poems American Jewish life is reflected.

The crown of his narrative poetry is his *Medurot Doakot* (Low Burning Fires), an epic of Indian life. It exceeds Silkiner's similar work in quantity and excels it in quality. It tells in twenty-three cantos both the life of the Indian tribes before the arrival of the whites and their struggle against its conquerors. The scene, as can be inferred from the English names of the leaders of the whites, is laid in New England or Virginia, but the description of the place is missing. The poet concentrated his attention entirely upon portrayal of the life of the tribes in its various phases and the narrative of tales and legends. He succeeded to a great extent to piece together fragments of Indian lore and isolated legends into a complete picture of the colorful life of the simple children of nature in which their simplicity, love, jealousies, struggle for leadership, bravery, passions, and their ultimate tragic fate are well reflected. The epic is replete with many idyllic episodes and gives descriptions of the scenes of savage life. The rich diction and beauty of style enhance the value of the poem.

Lisitzki also attempted to write a long dramatic semi-philosophical poem entitled *Naftule Elohim* (The Struggles of God) in which he undertook to present the Jewish tragedy in its darkest aspect, as revealed in the inhuman pogroms in the Ukraine during the years 1918-1920, in connection with the problems of Providence and the failure of religion to redeem the world from its iniquity and moral degradation. Unfortunately, he failed miserably in this attempt, for there is no unified plan, nor do the various visions of which the poems consist complete each other. And what is worse, the unbridled phantasy of the poet and the poetic license which he arrogated to himself are repellent to good taste. It is quite evident that the poet undertook a task far beyond his powers. Overlooking this unsuccessful venture, we can say of the poetry of this prolific singer that it is a noteworthy contribution to American Hebrew literature.

iii. Distinguished in the group of Hebrew poets in this country is Israel Efros (1891) who is the most lyrical of them all. His forté is the miniature poem, and the volume of his poems, entitled *Shirim*, published in 1923, is distinguished by traits and characteristics entirely his own, for with few exceptions, there is no trace of conscious or unconscious imitation. The very title of the volume, *Songs*, reveals to us one of the fundamental traits of his Muse, namely he does not poetize

but sings with a certain naturalness and freedom and without any restraint. "Song to me," he says in one of his miniatures, "is like the murmur to the mountain brook when rushing over rocks, descending from higher to lower cliff. The brook murmurs in its struggle to overcome obstacles but the struggle and the resulting murmur is its very life." Similarly, says the poet, runs the stream of life. Many are the obstacles in its way, but it sings while it wrangles with them. The simile is well chosen. It indicates not only the naturalness of Efros' song but also several of its other traits, its flow, lightness, vivacity, and above all, its calm. There are no roars in its notes but a pleasant sigh of the soul when the flow of its life strikes a crag in its path.

Endowed with a poetic eye and with a strong sense perception for which he renders thanks to God in one of his songs, our bard sees many things in the world around him which are hidden from the ordinary observer and he reveals them to us. He sees the continual flow of life in all things, even in the objects which are apparently lifeless. This note is especially felt in his nature poems, for he sees in the universe a continual metamorphosis of life forms. As a result, he senses the coming of spring even before it arrives, and notes the awakening of a new life in nature while the bare trees are still partly covered with snow. Thirst for beauty is another trait of his Muse, and he discovers it in many manifestations of nature which he portrays with delicate tints. Efros is remarkably economical in the employment of colors but he succeeds in painting beautiful pictures with very few. His nature poems are enhanced by injecting the lyrical personal note which very often borders on the symbolic. Thus, he concludes a beautiful poem on the sunset in which he describes the glow of light which the sun leaves in the sky after its setting by the query, "Will also my soul leave, after it crosses the boundary, a path of light in its wake?" a thought provoking query, indeed.

And it is in this power of seeing the hidden and the symbolic in the world and life in which his *forté* consists. It is also this power which enables him to sing on almost anything, no matter how commonplace it may seem. Thus, the tongue of a little bell, moving in its narrow confines and emitting tones as it strikes its head against the walls, is to him a symbol of the poet who sings while his heart contracts with pain at the narrowness of his own world. The lighthouse in the midst of a roaring sea, which throws its light on the dark foaming waves below, symbolizes to him the influence of great men upon a turbulent world.

The rise of a wave in the sea, its surging to the heights, and its consequent fall and breaking up into a spray of glistening drops, serves him as a symbol of many a tragic end of hope and aspirations. Likewise, the most ordinary event in life, such as the passing of a funeral in the street becomes to him a symbol pregnant with meaning. He notes the furtive glance of the old man at the hearse and the fright in the eyes of the child, and then again, the indifference of the passers-by to the return of the funeral cortege without the hearse at its head. His power of presenting pictorially and symbolically imparts meaning even to themes hackneyed from long usage. He sings of the passion of youth, its dreams, innocence, and faith, as of the departure of beloved guests who brought cheer and precious presents but hastened to depart. The budding of the knosps in the spring is likened unto the bursting into flame of small candles stuck by the spirit of spring into the trees. Occasionally, Efros turns to the reflective poem in which he injects a mystic and religious note, but his strength lies mainly in the miniature poem of the symbolic and pictorial type.

Efros, like other American Hebrew poets, also tried his hand at a semi-epical poem of Indian life entitled *Wigwamim Shotkim* (Silent Wigwams). Its distinguishing qualities are the beauty of the description of natural scenes and the depiction of the tragedy of the dying Indian tribe, aware of their fate and silently preparing to meet it, and above all the fine manner in which the love between the Englishman, Tom, a painter, and Lalari, the Sachem's daughter, is told. It is this story which is the real theme of the poem and the tragic end of which imparts to it the character of a ballad rather than of an epic.

iv. A poet who made his debut in Russia and continued his activity in this country is S. Ginzburg (1891). Like most of the American Hebrew poets, he is lyrical to a great extent and in many of his poems he sings of lost love, of unrealized dreams, and similar themes of the pattern type. There are, however, several notes in his poetry. Longing for human love and fellowship finds expression in some of his poems and the echo of the tragic fate of his nation reverberates through many others. This is especially expressed in his poems written during the years of the War under the influence of the massacres and pogroms perpetrated upon the Jews of the Ukraine, the land of his birth and youth. The pathos of the poems is deepened by the note of love and anxiety which the singer feels for the agony of his own kin left in that country.

The portrayal of the idyllic charm and beauty which surrounded his home in youth as contrasted with the storm and fury threatening its destruction are executed artistically. Family love, in general, forms an important element in our bard's poetry, and several of his first poems bear the impress of that love. The death of his young wife gave birth to a cycle of poems, *Pirhe Mowet* (The Flowers of Death), in which death is revealed to us in its full grimness. The poet does not protest against God or fate nor does he cry out in his pain, but depicts the moment of this tragedy in his life in a series of miniature portrayals which move and stir our soul. He succeeds in raising a pathetic episode in his own life to one of general human import.

Another characteristic of Ginzburg is his skill in narrative and semi-narrative poems. Of these, *be-Har Bet Columbia* (On the Hill of Columbia University) and *New York* are especially noted. In the first, his impressions of the magnitude of this institution of learning, the multitude of students of various colors and races who flock thither from distant lands to slake their thirst for knowledge, are described in fine verse and are integrated with the thoughts of the poet on the present cultural poverty of his people, the glories of the past, and the dreams for a future revival in Palestine. In the second, the poet attempted a daring feat, to sing of the rhythm of the life of New York which beats in its thousands of arteries in innumerable phases and aspects. He is not entirely successful, for such a theme is beyond his powers. He caught only several tones of this magnificent symphony as he calls it, and mainly those in the minor key. He depicts quite artistically the toil of the laborers in the factories, the surging sea of the multitudes rushing to the cars, elevated railways and subways, the mechanical movement of these masses, and the total lack of human relationship among the fellow-travellers. He also portrays effectively some scenes of New York at night, but he fails to perceive the creativeness of the humming life of that gigantic human beehive and the rhythm of the mighty energy stored within its walls, which, when turned into action, becomes power which moves the wheels of civilization of a great nation in their manifold revolutions.

The acme of his narrative poems is *Ahabat Hoshea* (The Love of Hosea). The theme is the symbolic trial to which God subjected the prophet, Hosea, when he told him to take a wayward woman, Gomer Bat Diblayyim, for a wife. The poet attempts to humanize this story and turn it into a love drama in which the struggles in the heart of

Hosea between his sense of purity and his love for the wayward woman, on the one hand, and the struggle between her real love for Hosea and the lure of lust in the soul of Gomer, on the other hand, are presented with much detail and with great vividness. For this purpose, the short Biblical tale is expanded and many imaginary incidents in the life of Hosea are introduced, and a fine canvas, on which the riotous pagan life in the capital of Northern Israel at the time is delineated, is supplied by the bard.

It is this canvas in which there are also interwoven the political events in which the chief merit of the poem consists, for some of its scenes charm us by the beauty of their description. The poet also succeeded in maintaining to a large degree the symbolism of the story, for he integrates the phases of Hosea's struggle with similar stages in his prophecy. The character of Gomer, her constant struggles to rise and her failure are skilfully drawn. But he fails to present Hosea in his full prophetic grandeur and the depth of the tragedy in his life. There is too much humanization and secularization in this drama. Yet the poem as a whole is a fine specimen of poetic creativeness.

v. Another poet who began writing poetry while yet a youth in Russia but who attained poetic perfection in this country is Hillel Babli (1893). This poet repeatedly tells us that he bends under the burden of the tradition of generations, and no matter how much he struggles to liberate himself from it, his lyre emits tones heard long ago in "the tents of Shem."

There is much truth in this assertion, for his poetry does possess some affinity with the fundamental expression of the poetic genius of Israel and in this consists his individuality. Babli's numerous poems contain as a matter of course, like those of the other American singers, many in which the motives are of the pattern type. These are distinguished by more or less skill and mastery of technique and language but do not express his real talent. His poetic talent lies in such songs which display traits of affinity with the elemental character of the Muse of Israel. The first of these traits is the power to penetrate beneath the surface of things and to grasp at the inner spirit rather than at the external appearance, at the permanent rather than at the temporal. Babli possesses that trait to a degree and it is revealed to us in some of his nature poems. Nature in the fall does not arouse in him, as with many another poet, wistfulness at the departed beauty, but the barrenness of the field, the moaning of the wind, the clouded skies, reveal to

him the sorrow of the soul of the universe, nay, of the Creator Himself who grieves at His world in its apparent powerlessness. Similarly, in another poem we are told that the glimmering stars, the murmur of the brook, the whisper of the flowers speak only in one voice—the voice of God as He reveals Himself in nature. This voice is also heard by our poet in the roar of the mighty cataracts of a great waterfall of which he sings feelingly in his poem, *Shirat ha-Ashdot* (The Song of the Fall). And thus our bard attempts in many of his nature poems to grasp at the power beneath the external phenomena which is the spirit animating them and which reveals itself through them.

But while the poet is sure of hearing the voice of God in the manifold manifestations of nature, he is perplexed when he grapples with the vicissitudes of life. It is true that in spite of his loss of much of the religious faith of his youth, God has not eluded him entirely, for as he says in his poem, *Hen Omnom Ki Nehersu*, he always cherishes a spark of religiosity. And it is this spark which at certain moments is kindled into a flame. These moments, though, are not frequent, and often, quite often, the poet feels lost and oppressed by the burden of life, by evil in the world, and the raging animosity around him. It is in these moments that he turns to God and offers songs of prayer. Like the Psalmist of old, he asks God to guide him in life. At times, he asks for power to love the world and man (*Tefillah*); at other times, he supplicates God that He enable him to spend his days in song and dream (*be-Shir we-Halom*), or that He merely grant him restfulness and quietude of soul (*Teno Li Atah Et ha-Menuḥah*). At still other times, he pleads for communion with Him and for spiritual exaltation so that he may draw out the good and the noble stored in the wide vistas of the world and in the recesses of the human heart (*be-Sha'aré ha-Neẓah*). Such is the note of religiosity which denominates many of Babli's lyrics, a note hitherto unknown in American Hebrew poetry, one which echoes the plea of the Psalmists.

Other notes in his lyrics are humility, moderation in life, and an attitude of calm towards its vicissitudes. He knows that the way to the permanent and eternal in life which is sought by so many poets is not found through storm and stress, but by quiet prayer and a heart searching after truth (*Paitan Nimhar*). He is also aware that life has unlimited enjoyments and aspects of beauty and that each day can bring new satisfaction provided one knows how to derive it.

This attitude is beautifully expressed in his narrative poem, *Mrs.*

Woods, in which the life of a nonagenarian woman who spent all her days on a farm in the Catskill Mountains is told in an idyllic manner. He concludes that poem saying, "Life is generous if we only know how to live. There is bliss and satisfaction in it for every one, and whoever has the will can attain happiness even if his life is ordinary and common."

Babli also tried his hand at a Biblical poem, *Eli*, in which the theme is the inauguration of young Samuel as a prophet. With fine poetic insight he portrays the tragedy of Eli, the high priest, who, when told by the youth of the voice he heard in the night, senses that glory is about to depart from him. Prophecy which was his in days gone by will be his no more, for it is bestowed upon young Samuel. There is also a fine characterization of the voice of prophecy which our poet describes as a manifold in which song and weeping, groans of the vanquished, and the triumphant cry of the conqueror mingle with the echoes of the murmur of brooks and the whispering of trees and flowers. He continues to relate the power of that voice which for a time is only calling in the wilderness, but is bound to penetrate some human heart, and then it issues forth from his mouth with strength and vigor, and people volens nolens listen to his words. The poem concludes with a noble passage in which we hear Eli comforting himself that the prophecy of young Samuel is only a continuation of his own for without predecessors there can be no successors; thus is the order of the world, when the sun of today sets, a new one rises tomorrow.

Babli, after his return from a visit to Palestine, wrote a cycle of poems in which are reflected his love for the land and the charms of its beauty. The best among them, however, are those which are imbued with the spirit of the tradition of the ages, *Yerushalayyim*, *Zfat* (Sefad), and *le-Yad ha-Kotel* (At the Wailing Wall). They impart to the reader the tremor of the soul which the dreams of ages, the visions of prophet and seer awaken in the heart of a Jew. It is just this spirit of tradition against which our bard struggles frequently which makes his poetry a distinct contribution to Hebrew literature.

vi. A. S. Schwartz (1876) writes only occasionally, and the number of his poems is not large, but they possess a charm all their own and are distinguished by their genuine Jewish spirit. His forté is description, and his favorite themes are exalted moments in Jewish religious life of the near past and episodes in the life of historical personages. He

succeeds in surrounding these scenes and episodes with a poetic halo which captivates the reader. His poem, *Kabalat Shabat* (The Reception of the Sabbath), which glorifies the entry of the Sabbath eve in a Lithuanian town, resuscitates before us a world when Princess Sabbath reigned in full glory and injected a spirit of holiness and spiritual exaltation not only in the life of the Jews but even in surrounding nature.

This same power of description is also evident in his nature poems. His colors are few, but he uses them dexterously. The pictures he draws are saturated with a calm beauty which quiet the soul and fill it with restfulness.

The three younger poets, M. Feinstein (1897), A. Regelson (1896), and S. Halkin (1899) have a common trait and can be designated reflective poets. They attempt to express some philosophical thoughts on the world and life with more or less success. They struggle in this endeavor and the traces of this struggle are quite evident in their poems.

vii. Feinstein possesses a fair lyrical talent and some of his lyrics display vigor and grace, but he strives to greater things, and hence his reflective poems. The best of the shorter poems of this type is *El Nafshi* (To my Soul), in which he attempts to solve the riddle of his own soul which ponders on the problems of being and existence, and is at a loss to harmonize its various desires and inclinations each of which struggles for expression. He explains the struggle by the fact that his soul is in reality a manifold for it contains the desires and emotions of many preceding generations. In it is echoed the fear of distant savage ancestors, of powers unknown, as well as their rage and unbridled lust, the sorrow of suffering predecessors, and also the deep religiosity of God-intoxicated men who have gone before. Hence the moods and the metamorphoses of the soul at different moments.

Feinstein made a bold attempt to elaborate a view of life in a long semi-narrative poem entitled, *Halom we-Goral* (Dream and Destiny). The theme is the strife between the aspirations of man and his dreams of happiness and cruel destiny which often ruthlessly destroys the golden webs of the soul. It is framed in a series of dialogues which takes place on the deck of a ship plying its way through the Mediterranean between a man and woman who meet casually and are attracted to each other. The woman had her happiness and dreams of love shattered by destiny—in the form of death who took away her beloved only a week after the wedding. The man is attempting to foster

a new dream in her heart. There are many beautiful passages in this poem and a number of fine reflections on life and its vicissitudes. The whole, however, is somewhat nebulous though there is a distinct effort made by the poet to inculcate the moral that dreaming and aspiring are in themselves valuable, even if the aims are not realized, for the very effort supplies content to life.

viii. There are notes of a social as well as of a mystic nature in Regelson's reflective poetry. In his narrative poem, *Cain and Abel*, he represents Cain as the symbol of the energetic ruthless builder of cities who is mastered by his greed for wealth and forces people to do his bidding. Abel symbolizes the dreamer who sees in wealth the source of all evil. The strife ends with the murder. Before he expires, Abel utters a prophecy that greed will ultimately destroy itself by passion and strife. The prophecy comes true. Cain marries Abel's daughter in the hope that she will imbue the world with the spirit of peace of her father and thus keep the toilers in check, but she cherishes revenge and ultimately poisons Cain and preaches inaction and contemplation. As a result, civilization is destroyed; but, prophesies the poet, energy cannot be eradicated and out of a small particle it will rise again. It is evident that Regelson wanted to depict the great struggle in history between forces of materialism and spiritualism and the ultimate harmony between them but it was too much for his powers, and the poem is only a fragment of a great idea. In a few other poems of his there are interwoven some fundamental ideas of the Kabbala, namely that the visible world is only the garment of God and that He is immanent within the universe and is its light. All these are only sporadic attempts of a reflective Muse struggling for expression, which has not yet found its way. Regelson also wrote a number of nature poems in which the leading motive is not its beauty and charm but the fruitfulness of mother earth, the source of life, the unlimited energy manifested in the universe and a desire to become a part of nature. A note of reflection is evident also in his love poems, wherein the motive is not the grace of the beloved but soliloquies on love as a great force in the universe. There are in these efforts of the young poet traces of artificiality and unconscious imitation, but there is also a note of his own and we are impressed by the poetic struggles of this singer.

ix. Similar endeavors at expression of lofty thoughts in poetic form are noted in S. Halkin. Like all poets, he sings of love, of nature, and life, still his poems possess a peculiar quality all his own. Halkin does

not only sing but also reflects and he injects this note of reflection in his poems. His nature poems do not aim to describe the beauty enfolded in the various manifestations of nature, but rather express the burning desire of his soul to commune with its indwelling power, the source of all life. This thought is powerfully expressed in the cycle of poems, *Al Hof Santa Barbara* (On the Shore of Santa Barbara). In this cycle he offers a prayer to mother nature and pleads that he be taken in among her numerous brood of children and be imbued with the spirit which animates them all. In numerous ways he expresses his desire to be immersed in the light which is diffused in the universe and be intoxicated by the energy and life which flows through all parts of the world.

His love poems which consist of a cycle of sonnets do not describe the beauty and charms of the beloved but spiritualize and idealize love as possessing a healing power for a soul suffering from the ills of the world. Such love, however, is very rare and his sonnets, therefore, are saturated with a spirit of wistfulness. He expresses his grief at the failure to obtain the redemption of his soul through love and that he is still wandering alone in a world full of confusion.

Halkin also attempted to write semi-narrative poems of which *Baruch ben Neria* is the best. In this poem, our poet portrays the tragedy of this disciple of Jeremiah who aspired all his life to prophecy, but it was denied to him, as it is said: "Thou, Baruch, do not seek great things" (Jer. XLV, 5). The pain and suffering of a man whose life's aspirations are not fulfilled and who is doomed to be the amanuensis of a man greater than he whom he both loves and hates is delineated with great pathos and sympathy.

Another motive of his poems is human suffering which he succeeds in portraying in a stirring manner. He frequently contrasts the sad fate of man with the indifference of nature which goes on diffusing light and beauty without heeding the groans of dying man.

148. ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

American Hebrew literature was developed, as we have seen, to a very great extent through the periodicals. Most of the stories, novels, and poems appeared first in weeklies, monthlies, or annuals, and were later collected in books. It follows, therefore, since periodical publications played such a role in literary expression, that publicistic articles, the short essay, and criticism should occupy an important place in the

Hebrew literature of this country, for these are the very staple of periodicals. Accordingly, there arose a number of publicists who discussed with greater or lesser skill the problems of the day and in whose articles certain aspects of American Jewish life during the last three decades are fairly well reflected. The questions most discussed were those of Jewish education, the problem of spreading Hebrew culture and literature among larger Jewish circles, those affecting various phases of Zionist activity, and similar matters. On the other hand, questions and problems pertaining to more fundamental aspects of life, such as the economic, the social, and the religious, and that of adjustment to the environment found little echo in the Hebrew publicistic articles. The result is a certain monotony and narrowness of scope of that branch of literature, on the one hand, and a mediocre level, on the other hand.

Among several factors which contributed towards the creation of such a state of affairs is the fact that there is no line of demarcation between the publicists, essayists, and critics. The same men often fulfill all these functions, and this manifold activity on the part of the writers is at times detrimental to the full development and perfection of either one of the literary expressions. Our survey must, therefore, be limited to individual writers rather than to the general aspects of these expressions.

i. One of the foremost Hebrew publicists and critics is M. Ribalow (1899). He made his debut while yet a youth in Europe with several poems in the Hebrew monthly, *ha-Shiloah*. On his arrival in this country in 1920, he made Hebrew literature his profession—one of the few Hebrew writers who succeeded in accomplishing this feat—and devoted himself to the writing of publicistic articles and critical essays. He became the editor of the only regularly appearing Hebrew weekly, the *ha-Doar* (The Post), in 1922, and since that time he has directed the destinies of that periodical with skill and devotion. He also edited several annuals of notable literary value. In his capacity as editor, Ribalow exerted considerable influence on the course of development of Hebrew literature in this country and this probably constitutes his distinct service to its cause. His editorials and articles are distinguished by vigor and terseness of expression, and at times, by flashes of thought, but they are often deficient in logical analysis of the question discussed and the comprehensive grasp of the factors entering in the complex situation as a whole. This is, in a measure, characteristic of the larger part of American Hebrew publicistic articles where effectiveness of ex-

pression frequently excels the content. Our author often introduces the emotional element, and at times even a poetic note in his articles.

The forté of Ribalow is criticism. His essays in this literary branch were collected in two volumes, *Massot* (Essays) and *Soferim we-Ishim* (Writers and Personalities). The volumes contain critical essays on almost every writer of the period under discussion, several of the Haskalah period, a number of pen portraits of writers in Yiddish and in European languages, and a few outstanding Jewish leaders. In one of his essays, our writer describes the function of criticism as follows: "True criticism is not a means but an aim in itself. It instructs and refers to the works of writers as illustrations, but its purpose is creative, namely to reveal truth and beauty, to inject a glow in the heart of the reader and to help him appreciate the function of art in life."

The task is undoubtedly a noble one, but unfortunately, few critics can live up to that standard, not excluding Ribalow. He, however, endeavored to obtain it partly, especially in the matter of beauty. His essays are distinctive by their beauty of expression and richness of diction, and frequently by an emotional affinity with the author he discusses. Due to this last quality he succeeds more as an interpreter of certain phases of the works dealt with than as an analytic and synthetic critic. Both analytical and synthetic criticism require a central idea as well as certain rules and canons according to which the works reviewed are to be judged, but these are absent in many of our critic's essays. This lack, however, is partially compensated by his intuitive power which not only helps him, as said, to detect the important characteristics of a work of fiction or a group of poems, but also the shortcomings and limitations of the poet or writer. In general, he excels in his criticism of fiction more than in that of poetry. In the latter type of essays one is almost lost in the numerous quotations from the poems and the poetic expressions of the critic himself. A special love for slogans without much endeavor to explain their connotation is another characteristic feature of our critic. Yet, notwithstanding all this, Ribalow's essays constitute a contribution to Hebrew criticism both by their aesthetic form and their quality.

ii. A critic who devoted himself entirely to his art is A. Epstein (1880). The range of his criticism is limited to belles-lettres and of these mainly to works of leading writers and poets of the last period. His critical essays collected in a volume, *Soferim* (1935), are distinguished by the spirit of earnestness with which they are imbued. He

approaches the writers and poets he discusses with reverence, for he sees in belles-lettres in both its aspects the very essence of culture, the innermost revelation of the human soul.

His theme is mainly the personality of the writer as it manifests itself in his works. As a result, we obtain a fair portrayal of the artistic and spiritual qualities of the writers in their various nuances but only a partial and indirect evaluation of the works. The very purpose determines the method which is psychological and partly analytical. I said partly analytical advisedly, for a full analysis can be obtained only when a work is taken in its totality and its constituent parts are examined carefully. Epstein is interested only in single phases and traits which in his judgment fit into the picture he drew of the author beforehand. In general, it can be said that this critic injects much of his own into the views of the world and life of the writers discussed, and some of the characteristics he attributes to them are not warranted by the works. Thus he attributes to both Bialik and Tschernichowski tragic and pessimistic motives in their poetry, in a larger measure to the former and in a lesser degree to the latter; and what is more, he finds that in these motives there is expressed the very greatness of Bialik. He is quite aware of the paradoxical nature of such assertions and proceeds to justify them by forced interpretations of passages which as regards Tschernichowski are surprising. He entirely fails to understand the spirit of some of his nature poems. It is quite evident that Epstein reads into the poems of these singers his own views and attitudes. On the whole, his essays, though their lucidity suffers considerably from the ornate and pictorial style, conduce to a better understanding of a number of novelists and poets of the period.

iii. S. Maximon (1882-1933) resembles Epstein in the earnestness of his endeavor and even exceeds him in that to a large degree. However, it was this very reverence for literary expression which hampered his productivity, for though he made his debut as early as 1911, almost all of his essays are contained in one modest volume, *Gewilim* (Scrolls). It contains three divisions: (a) pen-portraits of a number of Hebrew essayists and thinkers; (b) publicistic articles; and (c) several sociological and semi-philosophical essays. On all these there is the impress of a man who endeavors to express his thoughts in as clear and comprehensive a manner as possible, but does not always realize his aim. The reasons for this are the above-mentioned excessive reverence for expression which engendered a lack of self-confidence, a love for de-

tailed analysis of single concepts, and a predilection for poetic titles. The result is limitation of the scope of the essays to one point on the one hand, and lack of clarity in content through excessive analysis and profusion of details, on the other hand. Thus, in his essay on Bialik, entitled *Ba'al Tefillah* (Master of Prayer), in which Maximon wanted to delineate both the intimate character of the singer's poetry and its characteristic representativeness—inasmuch as he prays for many—the writer indulges in such a detailed analysis of prayer and its historical development in general that he loses sight of his purpose and neglects to tell us the nature of the prayer the poet offers. The same is true of his sociological and semi-philosophical essays in which the impress of Aḥad ha-'Am's thought and method is in great evidence, for he considered himself a devoted disciple of that thinker. The essays deal primarily with the relation of the individual to society, the struggle between the strong characterized leaders and the masses, and the inability of some spirited individuals to adjust themselves to society. There is keen analysis of social phenomena displayed and even psychological insight into the souls of the various types of individuals. But the excessive classification of types and the details about their inclinations and motives confuse somewhat the reader.

However, if we disregard completeness and definiteness, and look upon each essay as a collection of thoughts and observations on literary matters and social phenomena, we find in them both brilliance and depth. Maximon undoubtedly had in him much more than what is given in the essays, and it is regrettable that for various reasons he was prevented from complete expression.

iv. The field of literary criticism was not limited to belles-lettres or characterizations of distinguished writers but included also other literary expressions, such as historical, biographical, and bibliographical studies and contributions to literary history. Of the several writers who devoted themselves to this task there is to be noted Samuel Feigin whose contributions to almost every Hebrew periodical issued during the last two decades in this country and abroad are very numerous. His forté is reviewing though he strays from time to time into literary characterization. There is hardly an important work dealing with the Bible, Jewish history, and literature, and kindred subjects, which was not reviewed and discussed by him. He is, however, much more than a reviewer in the ordinary sense of the word, for his discussions are distinguished both by their quantity and their quality; most of them are

learned essays and contributions to the subjects dealt with. They contain not only logical and comprehensive, though succinct, abstracts of the contents of the books, but also valuable corrections of the views propounded by the authors as well as additional data which display knowledge and mastery of the various subjects discussed. Clarity in presentation of the often intricate content of the books as well as objectivity are outstanding characteristics of Feigin's critical essays. These qualities are also evident in other essays dealing with characterizations of writers and scholars. They are brief and general evaluations of their works, but seldom omit an important trait or phase of the writer and his works.

v. A prolific essayist of considerable ability is A. L. Malachi. He began his literary activity while yet a mere youth by contributing articles to Hebrew periodicals in Jerusalem, his native city. On arriving in this country a quarter of a century ago, he devoted himself almost entirely to literature, and there was not a periodical publication in which he did not participate. His specialty is essays on literary history of the modern period and bibliography. There is hardly an outstanding Hebrew writer to whose biography, literary characterization, and bibliography Malachi did not contribute. Of special merit are his essays dealing with the history and development of Hebrew literature in this country, especially of the early period. There is many a poet or writer whom Malachi saved from oblivion, and it was he who chronicled the rise of Hebrew poetry in the United States and the numerous attempts at publishing Hebrew periodicals or journals. A large number of his essays deal with historical subjects, especially with extraordinary episodes. He also edited collections of letters of famous writers, of which the *Igrot Frishman* is a notable example. A number of his essays were recently collected in a volume.

vi. Of the other essayists there are to be mentioned A. Goldberg, Z. Scharfstein, S. Frishberg, Mordecai Katz, K. Whiteman, and A. D. Markson. The first is a prolific writer and his numerous articles deal mainly with the questions of the day, especially with the Zionist movement. At the time they were written they helped to clarify the views on the subject discussed.

His essays deal with a multitude of subjects. Characterization of leading writers and poets, phases and currents of modern Hebrew literature, problems of Hebrew style and diction, and the nature of the Hebrew language and its peculiar characteristics. They are distin-

guished by their popular presentation of the content and frequently by brilliant observations.

The second, Z. Scharfstein, devoted himself to the problems of Jewish education in its practical aspect. As a pedagogue of note and as an author of numerous text books, he is well versed in all the ramifications of the intricate problem. His essays deal with the methods of teaching, the psychological aspects of the transmission of knowledge, and a number with the Hebrew language and its special qualities for expression. On all these there is the stamp of the writer who is master of his subject and of one who speaks with authority. Scharfstein also served as editor of several periodicals devoted to Jewish education.

Jewish education is to a large extent also the field of Frishberg and Whiteman, but more in its social aspect, in its relation to Jewish life. Most of their articles offer various suggestions for the improvement of the Jewish schools in this country. They also contain a demand for the deepening of the content of education and a change from secular tendencies to the traditional form. Frishberg also encroaches from time to time upon the field of literary criticism and publicistic articles, and a number of his essays deal with phases of Hebrew literature and problems of Jewish nationalism and Hebrew culture.

Mordecai Katz (Sec. 146), who was for a time the associate editor of the daily, *ha-Doar*, wrote in that journal as well as in the weekly, *ha-Ibri*, a considerable number of articles and essays which dealt with the questions of the day and with various problems in Jewish life. Of historical interest is his series of essays dealing with the state of Russian Jewry during the World War.

A. D. Markson (1882-1933) belonged to that type of writers whose excessive reverence for literary expression curtails their activity. The various essays which he wrote during his life were collected into a volume and published posthumously. The larger part of these essays are devoted to literary criticism and they display a fine sense of literary appreciation, as well as a power of analysis. Several of the essays are of a reflective character and express the thoughts and views of the author on the great events which took place in Jewish life during the years of the World War. These are distinguished by their style which possesses a poetic tinge.

vii. Nor was the light essay or the feuilleton neglected. Two writers who distinguished themselves in this form of writing are L. Lipson (111) and D. Persky. The first, who was for several years the actual,

though not the official, editor of the Hebrew weekly, *ha-Ibri*, wrote numerous publicistic articles and introduced the journalistic tone also in the feuilletons. In these the events of the day are surveyed in a light manner interspersed with humorous remarks and observations. The humor, however, is not of the wholesome type, but satirical and ironical. There is little of the permanent in these essays and they are only of historical interest.

The second is a colorful personality, one to whom the revival of Hebrew as a living language and the spread of its literature is the sole ideal of his life, almost an *idée fixe* and to the realization of which he has devoted two decades of activity. He made several attempts at literary expression and for several years he edited one or two short-lived school periodicals to which he contributed a number of stories for children. Due to his great love for Hebrew and its literature, he watched zealously over the fortunes and vicissitudes of that literature in this country, and thus became its chronicler, writing biographical surveys and noting with glee the rise of every young writer or the appearance of a book of whatever value and content. His great love for the Hebrew language aroused in him a desire to master its intricacies, learn its qualities, usages, and various forms of expression, in which efforts he succeeded to a great degree, and his notes and brief discussions on the proper usage of Hebrew words and phrases, published from time to time in periodicals, are distinguished by a keen sense of linguistics.

His forté, though, is the feuilleton. He wrote an exceedingly large number of feuilletons of which two selected collections were published in two modest volumes, one, *El-Elef Yedidim* (To a Thousand Friends) and the other, *Matamim le-Hag* (Spices for Festivals). The range of his theme is wide, a daily event, a date in the Jewish calendar, the appearance of a book, the celebration of a writer's jubilee or his demise, impressions of travels, and numerous other episodes. The humor is wholesome and much of it consists in puns and manipulations of the language. However, beneath the lightness there is revealed frequently a more serious attitude to Jewish life and its problems. The note of earnestness is evident in the essays written during the later years, when the writer became somewhat disappointed in his life's ideal, namely, that the development of Hebrew and its literature is the sole panacea for Jewish ills and began to notice the emptiness of American Jewish life. The earnestness is reflected in the longing for the

traditional form of life and in the expression of thoughts on its value and qualities. There is little depth in the thoughtful essays, but we meet frequently with a brilliant reflection which make us pause. Of interest is also the numerous anecdotes relating to the life and activities of many Hebrew writers met by Persky in the course of his travels, for he is a hero worshipper and he has preserved numerous bits of conversations and *bon mots* of his chosen heroes. On the whole, these feuilletons have more than a passing value.

CHAPTER XVI

AMERICAN JEWISH LEARNING AND THOUGHT

149. GENERAL FEATURES

The development of Jewish scholarship in this country followed along lines similar to that of Jewish literature in general. Its growth was conditioned by the growth of the Jewish population in the new world and by the corresponding intensification and ramification of Jewish life. Consequently, we can divide the entire span of time of its development into three epochs which correspond roughly with those of the general Jewish literature. These are: the early period beginning with the last quarter of the eighteenth to the fifties of the nineteenth century; the second, the following fifty years; and the third, from the turn of the last century to the present. Like all intellectual and spiritual activity in American Jewry during the seventy-five years embraced by the early period, that of scholarship was primarily the contribution of the Sephardic or Portuguese Jews, and was expressed largely in works bearing upon religion and synagogue worship, and partly on Hebrew grammar and lexicography.

The large influx of Jewish immigrants hailing from Germany and surrounding countries which began in the forties and ended in the late seventies of the last century initiated, as is well known, a new period in American Jewish history. It not only increased the Jewish population many times its number, but changed the entire Jewish life, widened its horizon, ramified it, and stamped it with its spirit. Henceforth, it is the German or the West-European Jews who held the spiritual hegemony in American Jewry. It is they who introduced the Reform movement in this country, they who injected the social element in Jewish life, resulting in the establishment of philanthropic institutions, fraternal orders, and similar organizations. It is also they who transported to these shores the tradition of Jewish scholarship which was prevalent in Germany. The settlement in America of numerous scholars, who had already made their debut in various fields

of learning in their former homes, the comparatively high cultural level of a stratum of the new immigrants and their interest in matters Jewish, the need for the defense of religious reform, and the desire on the part of the German Jewish intellectuals to enrich Jewish life—all these gave a great impetus to the growth and development of learning. As a result, scholarly activity became more regular and the production of such works was considerable. A factor in the quantitative increase of scholarly works was the fact that the new immigrants were for a time bilingual and employed both German and English as media for their literary expression. As a result, a number of works were originally written in German and later translated into English. From the eighties of the last century, another group of scholars made their entry in the field of Jewish learning. These came from the ranks of the newly-arrived East-European immigrants who came to these shores fully equipped for such work. These scholars used to a great extent Hebrew as their medium of literary expression, and we have thus a number of works written in that tongue.

The third period is, like that of Jewish literature in general, the period of glory of Jewish scholarship. This was due to a combination of a number of factors. The large increase of the Jewish population which took place in the first two decades of the present century, the corresponding intensity of Jewish life, the publication of the Jewish Encyclopedia which necessitated the importing of a number of European scholars, the reorganization of the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1902, the establishment of Dropsie College in 1895, the expansion of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, the founding of the Jewish Publication Society in 1886 and the subsequent expansion of its program to include the publication of scholarly works, the arrival of a large number of potential scholars, namely young men who came to this country equipped with extensive Jewish learning, and finally, the settlement in the United States of a considerable number of European scholars caused by the exigencies of the World War and post-War conditions—all these factors made the country, during the last three decades, a leading center of Jewish learning. The result is that the number of scholarly works produced here, during the time mentioned, equals, if not exceeds, those produced in all other countries.

Thus far the development of American Jewish learning parallels that of American Jewish literature in general. The case is different in regard to the relation of scholarship to life. While American Jewish

belles-lettres and publicistic literature in their trilingual expression developed in close touch to Jewish life and filled an actual need of that life—those in English and Yiddish in a greater, and that of Hebrew, in a lesser degree—the relation of learning to life was loose nor did it develop in response to an actual demand on the part of any stratum in Jewry. It is mainly the result of the efforts of individual scholars and a few educational institutions which are interested in its growth though more as a matter of formality and institutional tradition. Regrettable as it may be, the fact remains that American Jewish learning, in spite of its quantity and excellence of a number of its works, hardly exerted any influence upon the course of Jewish life in its various manifestations, nor did it mould its tendencies and movements in the least degree.

This isolation of learning from life is due in a large measure to the character and point of view impressed upon it by its founders and the majority of their successors. American Jewish learning is a plant transported from a foreign soil, for most of the scholars came to the country mature in scholarship, judgment, and point of view, and they carried on the traditions of European learning prevalent in Germany and neighboring countries in the second half of the last century. The attitude of that tradition towards learning was of an abstract nature, namely that it be carried on purely for the sake of increase of knowledge without any relation to the Jewish life around it, and it is that attitude which was carried over to this country by the scholars in the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the two decades following it. And while in Germany proper the spirit of Jewish learning changed later and was ultimately affected by the renaissance in Jewry and the national idea and in its turn became a leavening factor in Jewish life, it remained in this country untouched and unmoved by all the vicissitudes in recent history. The tendency to particularization and minute studies of fragments of history and literature prevalent in certain phases of general scholarship which was taken over by Jewish scholars only aggravated matters. On the whole, Jewish learning shuns the modern period and its field of interest ends with the middle of the eighteenth century. The matter was still further aggravated by introducing the tendency of concentration, prevalent in American industry, into Jewish scholarship. This caused scholarly activity to center, at least for the last two decades, around a few institutes, the heads of which, though men of ability and well-meaning, were of limited con-

ception of both Jewish life and Judaism and they stamped their views upon the activity as a whole.

The result was not only the isolation of scholarship from life, but also the predominance of a general spirit of dryness and a lack of comprehensive works embracing a fair portion of past Jewish life or literature. With several notable exceptions, the greater part of American Jewish scholarship is devoted to studies of fragments of history and literature of the distant past—the near past is excluded by its point of view—and no attempt was made to coördinate them into one whole. Similarly, there is a disproportionate interest in certain fields of literature at the expense of others, as for instance, the excessive number of studies devoted to fragments of Mediaeval liturgical poetry supplied in abundance by the *Genizah*. This, however, indicates only its general direction but does not in any way minimize the contribution of American Jewish scholarship to Jewish learning which is great in quantity and much of it distinguished by its excellence.

150. THE EARLY PERIOD

Due to the fact that up to the fifties of the last century the Jewish population in this country was very small, and that the majority of the Jews possessed, on the whole, little Jewish knowledge, literary productivity in the field of Jewish learning was both meager and sporadic. Furthermore, whatever was produced in this field bore primarily the character of popular works, for they were written with the purpose of filling the need for religious knowledge and instruction of the most elementary nature.

There were only two works on Jewish subjects written before the Revolution. The first is *A Grammar of the Hebrew Tongue*, published in 1734 by Judah Monis (d. 1764), a converted Jew, who was professor of Hebrew in Harvard for a number of years. The grammar has the distinction of being the first Hebrew book printed in America. The type for that book was imported from England. It was prepared as stated in the preface, as a textbook for use in the college, and the governors of that institution paid Monis thirty-five pounds for his labor. There is little originality in the work as it is primarily based, according to the author himself, on the grammatical works of David Kimḥi (Vol. I, Sec. 104) and Samuel Arkevolti (Vol. II, Sec. 9).¹ At the end

¹ Monis' use of Arkevolti's grammar can serve as a corroboration of the opinion of some writers that he hailed from Italy, as it is doubtful whether the grammar of this Italian savant was known outside of his native country.

of the book there are appended Hebrew translations of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostolic Creed. From the fact that in the short translations as well as in the two Hebrew lines on the title page there are a number of grammatical errors, it can be inferred that Monis' mastery of Hebrew was not complete.

The second work is Isaac Pinto's English translation of the prayer-book according to the Sephardic ritual published in 1766; it is not only the first translation of its kind in America but the first English rendition of the prayers in general. The author utilized the Spanish translation of the prayers by Nieto published in 1740.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century when the Jewish population began to increase by a gradual infiltration of immigrants from Germany and the neighboring countries, there is a perceptible increase in the productivity of books the purpose of which was to impart information about the practice of Judaism and Jewish knowledge in general. The greater part of these consist of English translations of the prayer-book or of the Passover Haggadah, or of the funeral ritual, including the laws and customs, or of sermons and discourses. A number are textbooks for the teaching of Hebrew and grammatical works. Of these are to be mentioned the *Mafteah El Lashon Ibri we-Hokmat ha-Dikduk* (A Key to the Hebrew Language and the Science of Grammar) by Joseph Aaron, published in New York, 1834, which contains both Hebrew text and an English translation; *A Critical Grammar of the Hebrew Language* in two volumes by Isaac Nordheim (1838-1840), professor of Semitic languages at the University of New York; *Imré Shefer*, a dictionary of Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic by M. Henry (1838); an English translation of the quasi-historical book, *Sefer ha-Yashar* (Vol. I, Sec. 188) (1846); and a German translation of Ben Zeeb's Hebrew version of the Ben Sira together with the Hebrew text. These complete the list of books written for the purpose of dispensing Jewish knowledge in a popular manner.

Of the works which deal with philosophical and theological subjects, there deserve to be noted *Faith and Reason* by Rabba Henriques, published in 1804; *Kol Yakob* (The Voice of Jacob) by Jacob Nikelsberg (1815); and *The Philosophy of the Hebrews* (1837) by David Davies. The first is an attempt to defend revelation against the attacks of the heretics; the second is an apologetic work in which the author attempts to refute the assertions which were frequently made at the

time by Christian divines that Judaism is inferior to Christianity; and the third is an exposition of the views and doctrines of the prophets.

151. ISAAC LEESER AND ISAAC MEIR WISE

The second half of the last century can be considered the formative period of American Judaism. The continual increase of the number of Jews which took place during the time, the arrival of men of intellect and scholars in large numbers brought about an exceptional increase in intellectual, spiritual, literary, and scholarly activity. During these years, the Reform movement grew from small beginnings into a well-defined spiritual current in American Jewry. On the other hand, numerous efforts were made to strengthen the traditional type of Judaism; institutions of learning were founded; unions of congregations and organizations of a social and philanthropic nature were established; periodicals of a literary and scholarly character published; works in various fields of learning written; and a general tendency was displayed on the part of spiritual leaders to plant Judaism on a firm basis and enable it to strike root in the new soil.

Many were the men who contributed their share to this manifold spiritual activity, but of these there were two who can be said to have been the moving spirits of the generation who impressed this entire activity with the stamp of their personalities, indomitable energy, and indefatigable work. These were Isaac Leeser (1806-1869) and Isaac Meir Wise (1819-1900), the former distinguishing himself as the guardian of traditional Judaism, and the latter as the father of the Reform movement.

i. Leeser was born at Neukirchen, a small town in the province of Westphalia, Germany. Equipped with a fair Jewish and secular education, he emigrated to the United States in 1824 and settled at first in Richmond, Virginia, where he engaged for a few years in business. He soon attracted attention by a series of articles in a Richmond paper in which he skilfully refuted an attack against the Jews made in the *Quarterly Review* in England in 1828, and as a result he was elected spiritual leader, in 1829, by the Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia. From that year his activity on behalf of American Jewry began which continued without remittance for forty years until his death. Leeser was endowed with several qualities which compensated for his shortcomings. These were an unlimited fund of energy, an intense love of Judaism, and a wholesome sincerity of purpose.

This is not the place to delineate in detail the multifarious works in which this leader engaged. Suffice it to say that he introduced the English sermon, translated educational textbooks and wrote several of his own, published volumes of sermons, edited and published books written by Grace Aguilar as well as the work of Dias, *The Inquisition and Judaism*; translated from the Hebrew Joseph Schwartz's *Tebuat ha-Areẓ* (Vol. III, Sec. 91), a work on Palestine geography; rendered into English the prayer-book and the entire Bible; and finally, founded in 1843 the monthly, *The Occident*, which he edited for twenty-five years.

In the field of organization of Jewish life, the most notable of his achievements were the establishment of the Board of Hebrew Ministers, the Hebrew Educational Society, the Jewish Hospital, and the Maimonides College, and finally was instrumental in founding the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, all in Philadelphia. However, more important than all these institutions was his personal efforts on behalf of traditional Judaism. He strove to stem the spread of the Reform movement which made its beginning in the city of Charleston, S. C., as early as 1825 and which was revived again in 1836. Leeser visited that city and challenged the Reform minister, G. Posnansky to a debate. For more than two decades he spent several months each year in itinerant preaching and visiting the scattered communities of the East and Middle West. He also collaborated with Wise and other leaders of the Reform movement in several attempts to organize a united American Jewry, attending all the conferences called for that purpose, and desisted from such efforts only when he became convinced that there could be no rapprochement between the conservative and reform elements in Jewry. The activities of Leeser thus form the warp and woof of American Jewish life during half a century.

Leeser's contribution to the furtherance of Jewish scholarship in this country consists primarily in his editing and publishing *the Occident* for a quarter of a century and in his translation of the Bible into English. *The Occident* was a powerful factor in the raising of the spiritual and intellectual level of American Jewish life in the first two decades of the second half of the nineteenth century. It was in its columns that important problems of the day were discussed in a dignified and serious manner. It served as a clearing house for different views on the aims, purposes, and destiny of Judaism in the United States, for though Leeser championed in his editorials the cause of

tradition in a trenchant manner, he was broadminded enough to allow expressions of opinions different than his own. As a result, the pages of that monthly mirror faithfully reflected the religious ferment in Jewry at that time. Finally, it served as a medium of scholarly expression for the recently arrived learned Rabbis and laymen who published their essays and studies on Biblical, historical, and literary subjects.

The translation of the Bible was Leeser's great literary achievement and represented many years of patient labor and devotion to a task which he considered sacred. Leeser was not fully equipped for this work, for he was no specialist in Hebrew philology, nor a master of Jewish learning in general, and he was quite conscious of his shortcomings, but he was inspired. He says in his preface: "I thought in all due humility that I might safely go to the task, confidently relying upon that superior aid which is never withheld from the inquirer after truth." He made good use of the various German translations by Jews of the collective commentary known as the *Biur* (Vol. III, Sec. 81), and of other Jewish exegetic works. As a result his translation though based in style upon King James version can be considered an independent work for the changes he produced are numerous and great. His prime concern was to supply the traditional interpretation when necessary and the retention of the Jewish spirit, at times even at the expense of beauty of style. The translation went through numerous editions, and until the new Jewish Publication Society version was issued in 1917, it was the only source from which many Jews not conversant with Hebrew derived their knowledge of the Bible in accordance with Jewish tradition.

ii. Of greater influence upon American Jewish life were the activities of Isaac Meir Wise (1814-1900). His strong personality, indomitable energy, and indefatigable endeavors to organize and elevate the spiritual life of American Jewry and to advance the cause of Judaism in the way he conceived it left an indelible mark upon Jewish life in this country. There was hardly a phase of that life during the second half of the last century, whether religious, social, cultural, or literary in which Wise was not a moving spirit. He is often called the father of American Reform Judaism, a title which is fully justified in his case, but must not be taken literally. Wise was not the first one to introduce reforms in American Judaism. The Sephardic congregation in Charleston, S. C., made an attempt at reform as early as 1825, and from 1835 on it functioned officially as a Reform congregation. Two other

Reform congregations, the Har Sinai in Baltimore and Emanuel in New York were established several years prior to Wise's arrival in the United States. Nor did he excel the other leaders of the Reform movement in scholarship or in depth of thought. His scholarship, though extensive, as evidenced by his prolific literary activity in several branches of Jewish knowledge, was neither deep nor thorough, and his speculation, though at times brilliant, was frequently superficial and not clear. And yet, he fully deserves the above-mentioned title, for it was he who turned the numerous attempts on the part of many individuals and isolated congregations into a well-defined movement possessing unity of purpose and form. It was he who endowed the movement with a spirit of sincerity, though not always turned in the proper direction, and imparted to it a positive aspect saving it from the pure negativism which dominated many of the circles of reformed Jews; and finally, it was he who founded the principal institutions of this party in American Jewry, whether of learning, organizational, or social, and thus supplied it with the means for stability and permanence. In addition, his extensive literary activity which embraced the writing of numerous works, both in English and German, and the publishing and editing of two periodicals, *The Israelite* (1854) and *Deborah* (1855), stimulated interest in Jewish literature and knowledge. Such achievements should be appreciated at their proper value by the impartial historian even if his view of Judaism differs totally from the one promulgated by the leaders of Reform, and accordingly we will survey briefly the life, activities, and the views on Judaism and its destiny, of Wise, the man who impressed an important part of American Jewry with his spirit.

Isaac Meir Wise was born in the village of Steingrub in Bohemia. He received his first instruction in Jewish studies from his father and later in the *Heder*. At the age of twelve, he entered the *Yeshibah* at Prague where he spent a number of years, and after visiting several other *Yeshibot* in Bohemian cities, he finally turned to secular studies and at the age of twenty-one he entered the University in Prague. Equipped with a University education he became Rabbi of the Jewish community at Radniz, a city in Bohemia. Young Wise at the time was inoculated with the liberal spirit of the age and as a result came in conflict with the government authorities who were dominated by a bureaucratic spirit. He therefore decided to emigrate to America.

He arrived in this country in the summer of 1846 and soon afterwards

became Rabbi at Albany, New York, where he stayed until 1854. He then accepted the leadership of Congregation *Bné Yeshurun* at Cincinnati, Ohio, which position he held until the day of his death.

It did not take long and the young immigrant Rabbi became the outstanding leader in the American Jewry of those days. A combination of factors and circumstances enabled him to occupy that post of leadership. First, there were the personal traits of character, his energy and sincerity. Wise was imbued with the spirit of reform while yet in Bohemia. True, he had no clear notion as to how far this reform should go nor did he elaborate in his own mind the principles on which this reform should be based. All these came later in the course of his half-century activity. At the beginning of his career in this country he was dominated by one notion, that there must be a change in Judaism and that it must adapt itself to the new conditions in the general world in order to exist and progress. Possessing an exuberant energy and believing that he was the one to effect that change in American Judaism he undertook the task. External conditions were favorable to the realization of his task. The majority of the Congregation at the time consisted of German Jews who spoke and read German, and while, with the exception of two, they were officially preponderantly Orthodox, yet the desire for reform stalked abroad. A large part of the members of these congregations were inoculated with that spirit yet in their native country and they were ready for changes in the synagogue service and in the ritual, only waiting for the bold spirit to proclaim that desire openly and publicly. In addition, there were very few men who possessed the quality of leadership, the energy, the boldness, and the earnestness of purpose to turn the latent and the potential desire into an actuality. Wise was the only one who possessed these qualities and several more in addition, a facile pen, power of speech and an adaptability to local conditions. Within a very short time he mastered the English language and he was thus able to appeal not only to the recently arrived immigrants but to the more Americanized element in Jewry as well.

The first steps of Wise's activity in behalf of reform in Judaism were very moderate. The moderation was due to caution, fear of opposition, to a desire to unite all elements, even the more conservative and the Orthodox, and above all to an innate streak of conservatism from which he emancipated himself gradually and slowly and ultimately reached the standpoint of radical, even if not of extreme reform. The following

two statements will illustrate the great change in view which Wise underwent within several decades. In 1849 he wrote, "True, I am a reformer, but I look to the Halakah for a basis of any contemplated change. I will never agree to any reform which opposes the *Din*."² Only twenty years later, the same Rabbi proposed at the Philadelphia Rabbinical Conference in 1869 to dispense with circumcision as a condition for the admission of proselytes into the fold of Judaism. He buttressed his proposition by the statement that "circumcision is not a necessary condition for entrance into Judaism and the omission of the rite does not exclude any Israelite from the community of Israel."³ To the credit of the Conference it must be stated that the proposition was promptly shelved, for even the radicals in the assembly were not as yet ready to go thus far, to renounce circumcision, one of the principal tenets of Judaism.

Much of this rather extreme change in Wise's views is to be attributed, besides to psychological reasons, to his sense of practicality. Wise was primarily a man of action with a strong sense of realism. When he first made his plea in 1847 for a unified order of ritual in this country which he called *Minhag America*, he expected to unite all religious factions in the land, and he therefore emphasized that this *Minhag* must be according to *Din*, though he also stressed that it must take in consideration scientific principles and the demands of the times. He even agreed tacitly, though hardly inwardly, to the resolutions of the Cleveland Conference in 1855 which not only declared the Bible of divine origin, but also acknowledged the Talmud as containing the logical exposition of the Biblical laws which must be expounded and practiced according to its interpretation. He still hoped to unite American Jewry in a platform of moderate reform and let time take care of further progressive development. It was only when he became convinced that he could be the leader of only a faction in American Jewry which possessed a definite desire for a Reformed Judaism that he loosened his restraint and continually yielded one conservative position after another until he ended in radical reform. He began in 1846 with the introduction of a mixed choir, followed it up in 1850 by allowing the playing of the organ on the Sabbath, abolished successively the calling up to the Torah and the second day of the holidays,

² *The Occident*, 1849.

³ Quoted by D. Philippon in his introduction to the *Selected Writings of Isaac M. Wise*, p. 74.

reduced Hebrew prayers to a minimum, and finally introduced services with uncovered head. There were, of course, other leaders of Reform who were more extreme than Wise, but his lead was followed and he was therefore instrumental in introducing these innovations in most of the Reform congregations. The logical consequence of these continual reforms diverging more and more from the standard type of Judaism hallowed by the Jews for millennia, was the Pittsburgh Conference in 1885 where not only the authority of the Talmud was repudiated but the Bible was stripped of its divine origin, and only its moral laws were acknowledged as binding and Sunday services sanctioned. It is true that Wise opposed the Sunday services, nor did he agree with the view on the Bible, and consequently one may agree with his biographer, D. Philippon, that he was not responsible for the Pittsburgh platform. Yet his constant progressive reform which tended more and more in the direction of radicalism led indirectly to the formulation of that platform.

To his credit it may be said that in all these numerous turnings to radical reform Wise was actuated by a sincere motive, no matter how erroneous that might have been. He earnestly believed that these changes were advancing the cause of Judaism which had to adapt itself to the demands of the time in order to exist and be saved from the constant encroachment of materialism, the attacks of science and superficial lack of faith.

Wise attempted to justify his constant striving toward radical reform by a theology which, though not systematic and though a curious mixture of conservatism and radicalism, yet seemed to have served his purpose. Like his practical activity, it displays a gradual swerving from the traditional view. Its gist is as follows. It starts out by positing that the Pentateuch alone is the only source of the authoritative law in Judaism and that all laws in the Talmud based on the thirteen rules of interpretation as well as those which are called *Halakah le-Moshe mi-Sinai*, i.e. laws supposed to have been delivered by Moses orally, are not always authoritative and are merely Rabbinical laws, namely those enacted by the Rabbis. He thus deprives a great part of the Oral Law embodied in both parts of the Talmud, the Mishnah and the *Gemarah*, of real authority. He admits that the Pentateuch itself authorizes interpretation of its laws and endows such explanations with authority, for it says, "Thou shalt not depart from the words which they—i.e. the priests and court mentioned in vs. 8—may tell

thee to the right or to the left." (Deut. XVII, 11). However, he claims that this authority of interpretation extended only to the high court or the *Sanhedrin*, and further limits this authority by asserting, on the basis of an Agadic statement in the Jerusalem Talmud, that the real *Sanhedrin* terminated with Gamaliel II around 120 C.E.

Had Wise stopped at this point he would have abrogated only a part of the Oral Law, but he went much further. Quoting several Agadic passages as support, he attempts to prove that the Talmudists altered some of the laws of Moses or added to them; he wonders how they dared to act thus, and in order to obviate the difficulty he elaborates a theory which draws a distinction between the various parts of the Pentateuch. The real Torah, says he, which is eternal law and doctrine and is obligatory upon all Jews forever embraces only the Decalogue. It is this part which is revealed by God, while the body of the law contained in the Pentateuch is called *Torat Moshe* (The Law of Moses). It reduces to practice the fundamental concepts contained in the Decalogue and expounds its doctrines and adds a number of laws. As such, these laws are not only subject to interpretation and change, but what is more, their practice is limited by the Pentateuch itself to Palestine. Only those laws of the *Torat Moshe* which reduce to practice the doctrines of the Decalogue are eternal, while the special laws are limited in their obligation both in space and time. He attempts to prove his theory by an entirely too literal interpretation of several verses in Deuteronomy and by several Agadic statements from Talmudic literature. In order to buttress his theory, he asserts that the reformation in the time of Ezra was not an enactment of new laws, as the critics would have it, for the laws of Moses were known before and were even practiced to a large extent, but that since their obligation is limited only to Palestine they were not practiced in exile, and hence they were reintroduced by Ezra. He further speaks of the well known distinction between the letter and the spirit of the law and reiterates in several essays that the laws and doctrines of the Decalogue are eternal and obligatory in letter and spirit, while the laws of Moses are eternally valid and obligatory only when they embody an eternal principle. Otherwise they are subject to change and even abrogation in case they were limited in obligation.

Wise did not elaborate his theory fully and did not classify the laws according to their eternal validity and did not tell us which express the doctrines of the Decalogue and possess eternal validity and which

are to be observed in spirit only. The theory, however, gave him sufficient latitude to introduce sweeping reforms in Judaism. It may be observed that his theory is not entirely original, for Holdheim (Vol. III, Sec. 64) already drew a distinction between eternal laws and laws enacted for Palestine only. Even Spinoza had stated that the greater part of the Torah was aimed as a constitution for the Jewish body-politic in Palestine and drew his own conclusions from this thesis (Vol. II, Sec. 84). He, however, does not refer to his predecessors.

Wise's conservative strain expressed itself in his attitude to Biblical criticism which he greatly opposed. He believed that Genesis and Deuteronomy are the original works of Moses with very few later additions. Exodus and Leviticus were edited not later than the time of Deborah but from original Mosaic documents, while Numbers, though it was edited somewhere about the time of Samuel and probably by that prophet, also contains numerous Mosaic sections, some of which originally belonged to Deuteronomy.⁴

Wise was far greater as a man of action than as a man of theory. Of his leading accomplishments are the organization of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1873; the foundation of the Hebrew Union College two years later; and the establishment of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1889. It is through these institutions that he supplied stability and permanence to Reform Judaism in this country.

His literary activity was prolific and extensive. There was hardly a year in the half century of his activity in this country in which he did not contribute to Jewish literature either by complete works or by a series of articles in his own weeklies or in other periodicals. The number of his works amount to a dozen bulky volumes besides numerous essays. They fall into three classes: speculative, religious, and historical. Of the first class the noted work is *The Cosmic God* in which he attempts to reconcile the God-idea of Judaism with the claims of science. To the second class belong works dealing with the origin and dogmas of Christianity, and its relation to Judaism. The most important of these are *The Origin of Christianity and a Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles; Judaism and Christianity, Their Agreements and Disagreements; and A Defense of*

⁴ For the statement of these views see his essays, *The Law, Sources of Theology of Judaism, Reformed Judaism*, and his work, *Pronoas*.

Judaism versus Proselytizing Christianity. To the third class belong his *Jewish History* and the *Pronoas*. The history consists of two volumes; the first deals with the period up to the destruction of the First Temple, published in 1854, and the second treats of the Second Commonwealth. It is permeated by a rationalistic spirit. The *Pronoas* is devoted to an attack against negative higher criticism of the Bible. It discusses in detail the origin, date, and authorship of every book of the Bible. As was noted, his conclusions are very conservative, for he defends valiantly the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. His literary activity, though, was not limited to scholarly works and publicistic articles but embraced also belles-lettres, for he wrote a considerable number of novels in English and German mostly on historical themes.

His works have primarily historical value, for most of the theories and views expressed in them are antiquated. Some are even curious, such as his identification of the Apostle Paul with Elisha ben Abuya or Aḥar, a contemporary of Akiba. In their time, though, they aroused interest and dispensed Jewish knowledge to a large degree.

We may, therefore, safely assert that Wise's many-sided activities stimulated the growth of Jewish literature and gave an impetus to further development of Jewish scholarship during the formative period of American Jewry.

152. BIBLE EXEGESIS, TRANSLATIONS AND DIVERSE BIBLICAL STUDIES

A. EXEGESIS

Isaac Leeser and Isaac Meir Wise each endeavored in his own way not only to spread the knowledge of the Bible among the Jews of America but to approach its study from a Jewish point of view. They thus aroused an interest on the part of Jewish scholars to continue their labors and even undertake to write commentaries on some of the books of the Bible, and in the course of time there developed in this country considerable activity in the field of Biblical exegesis.

i. The first to enter this field was Rabbi Benjamin Szold (1827-1902) who published in 1888 his Hebrew commentary on the Book of Job. The commentary is preceded by an introduction in which the author endeavors to determine the date of the book and also to elucidate the purpose. As regards the first, he believes with many Biblical scholars

that it was written during the Babylonian Exile, though, for the sake of compromise, he admits that the story of Job was known in Israel long before that, possibly even in the time of Moses. In this he relies on a Talmudic statement (Baba Batra, 14b) which says that Moses wrote the Book of Job. As regards the purpose of the book, he differs with the current opinion that it was intended to solve the problem, why the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper. He adduces a number of arguments against this view, the chief of which is that the book really offers no solution. His own view is that the purpose of the book is to teach us how a righteous man ought to bear himself under adversity, and he believes that Job stood the test for he did not deny God nor Providence. He admits, though, that Job was somewhat perplexed about Providence. Interesting as the view may be, the commentary does not fully substantiate it by the explanation of the verses.

In the commentary the author displays a spirit of penetration into the meaning of the verses. From time to time, however, a homiletic strain is evident in the explanation of passages. Nor is the author's mastery of grammar complete, and occasionally his derivation of words from their verbal roots is far-fetched. On the whole, the commentary represents a worthy attempt at Biblical exegesis from a conservative and Jewish point of view.

Szold's commentary closes the second period of American Jewish scholarship. The turn of the century marks the rise of both intensive and extensive scholarly activity. However, the activity manifested itself primarily in other branches of Jewish learning and only to a lesser degree in Biblical exegesis. There were only a few scholars who undertook to write commentaries on Biblical books. Of these the noted are Moses Bottenwiser, Morris Jastrow (d. 1921), and Max Margolis.

ii. The first two were dominated by the spirit of Biblical criticism and at times even go to extremes. Yet of Bottenwiser it can be said that he endeavors to insert a Jewish note in his exegesis as well as in his book, *The Prophets of Israel*. He also chose the Book of Job for commentation. In regard to the purpose of the book, his view resembles to an extent that of Szold. The author did not intend to offer a solution to the problem of suffering, but to refute the popular conception of religion based on worship for the sake of reward. This popular view is represented by the friends of Job. Job, on the other hand, illustrates the spiritual view of human destiny. It is true that he undergoes a spiritual struggle and frequently doubts the justice of God, but he

emerges from this struggle purified. The real ways of God cannot be known, for the distance between the finite and the infinite is great. The reward of the righteous is a clear conscience and fellowship with God. To obviate the difficulty which the epilogue presents wherein it is told that God gave Job double of all he possessed previously, he asserts that it is a later addition and was not in the original text. Bittenwiser in his commentary substantiates his view of the purpose of the book by re-arranging the chapters and by numerous emendations in the verses which he offers to suit his purpose. He deals with the text freely and shifts the passages indiscriminately. In general, he follows the readings of the Septuagint or the *Peshitta* in preference to those of the Massoretic text. As for his numerous emendations, only a few are justified and really elicit a clearer meaning of the verse. Quite a number display poor understanding of the spirit of the Hebrew language and are contrary to the rules and usage of the Hebrew syntax. In this he resembles the non-Jewish Biblical critics who display keen power of analysis of the Biblical books and mastery of the grammar, but the language itself remains for them a sealed book.

The same critical attitude prevails in his other work, *The Prophets of Israel*. The purpose the author set for himself was to evaluate the prophetic contribution to religious thought. The point of view is, on the whole, that of higher criticism. Starting with the assertion that the position of the Graf-Wellhausen School, namely that monotheism was unknown in Israel prior to the advent of the prophets, cannot be dislodged, he proceeds to give his account of prophecy in the light of this hypothesis. As a result, he emphasizes the struggle which went on between the priests, the representatives of the popular religion and the law, and the prophets who championed a higher conception of religion and morality. He experiences, however, difficulty in explaining the origin of prophecy in an environment saturated with a comparatively low concept of religion and he obviates the difficulty by assuming that its spontaneity was due to genius, namely the prophets were possessed of a special intuitive power above all men. In all this there is little new, nor does his hypothesis of prophetic genius explain the phenomenon of prophecy, for even genius must possess an environment out of which it originates. He further endeavors to prove the universalism of prophets and the complete spirituality of the religion they taught, and their struggle against the ritualism of the popular religion.

Bittenwiser concentrates primarily on Jeremiah and devotes the

larger part of his work to this tragic prophet. He proves most of his point by a skilful, though often forced, exegesis in which he makes free use of emendation and rearrangement of passages and chapters in the Book of Jeremiah as well as in other prophetic books. On the whole, the work, while clarifying some important points in the teachings of the prophets, displays little of a genuine Jewish approach toward the understanding of the unique phenomenon of Jewish prophecy.

iii. Jastrow's two works, *The Book of Job* and *The Gentle Cynic* which contain introductions, new translations of, and commentaries upon, Job and Ecclesiastes have a common thesis and purpose. The gist of the first is that both Biblical books are not unified compositions but composite works in varying degrees which passed through several editions until they were taken into the Canon. Furthermore, both represented in their original forms unorthodox opinions and were made to agree with the traditional views by successive additions. The dates of the authorship of the original forms he considers to be 400 B.C.E. for Job, and the first half of the third century B.C.E. for Ecclesiastes or Koheleth. The original Job, Chas. III-XXVII, was written by an author who belonged to a circle of enlightened who were sceptical about God's providence because of suffering in the world, and he gave utterance to his opinions in a series of debates, utilizing for the purpose an old folk-tale. He justifies his view by claiming that the sympathy of the author is with Job and not with the friends whose speeches are only a device in order to emphasize Job's view. Additions are Chas. XXVII-XXXI, the speeches of Elihu (Chas. XXXII-XXXVII), the speeches of God (Chas. XXXVIII-XLII), and numerous insertions in the text of the original book. All these aim to change the character of the original work, reconcile its views with tradition, as well as to present orthodox solutions to the problem, why the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper.

Similarly, the original form of Koheleth was a work written by a man of a circle who differed in their views upon life from the accepted ones. His attitude toward life is that of cynicism, but of the gentle kind. He sees no progress in the world, only constant repetition; life offers no definite aim, and the various pursuits no real satisfaction. However, he is good-natured and does not despise life and is even inclined to enjoy it. Because of his gentleness he is not consistent and often contradicts himself. He wrote under a nom de plume which was misinterpreted to mean Solomon, and hence his writing was popular, a fact which

aroused apprehension in orthodox circles. They, therefore, set out to change its character by continued additions and insertions.

The purpose of Jastrow is to translate the books in such a way as to present them as much as possible in their original form and strip them of the additions by indicating their character in the translation. In the case of Koheleth, he places the additional passages in the appendix. He also endeavors to change the readings in numerous verses in order to make their meaning clear. In the notes appended to the translations he offers comments and justifies his changes in the text. The works display erudition and an earnest effort to present the content of these two literary masterpieces to a large circle of readers from a modern and critical point of view. Many of his conclusions, however, are not acceptable.

iv. The commentaries of Max L. (Yom Tob Lippman) Margolis (d. 1934) on the Books of Micah and Zephaniah—the first written in English and the second in Hebrew—display an entirely different spirit. This distinguished Biblical scholar is not only conservative in his attitude towards the Bible, but even maintains to a large extent in his exegesis the traditional point of view of the great Jewish exegetes of the Mediaeval Ages. He is not averse to criticism, and at times offers emendations of readings, but he deprecates the freedom with which these emendations are made, and the carelessness displayed by critics in assuming the late dates of many a passage in the books of the pre-Exilic prophets, thus destroying their unity. In regard to the first, he posits the principle that we have no right to emend any word the meaning of which is not clear to us, for after all we do not master the Hebrew language. It is quite possible that the very word which presents a difficulty to us is the proper one, and that the difficulty is only due to our ignorance (Comment. on Zeph. II, 1). The question of the unity of the books he commented is discussed in the succinct introductions in which he refutes with great skill the arguments of the critics who post-date many passages in them; some are even relegated to late Maccabean times.

The commentaries themselves are wonderful examples of genuine Jewish exegesis. Margolis pays great attention to the explanations of Rashi, D. Kimḥi, Ibn Ezra, and other Jewish commentators, and he even utilizes Midrashic statements and frequently elicits ingenious explanations of verses from such statements. As a result, these commen-

taries display a penetrating insight into the meaning of the prophetic utterances.

v. Of great interest is a work by a younger scholar, Israel Eitan (d. 1936), which, though entitled, *A Contribution to Biblical Lexicography*, sheds much light on Biblical exegesis. The thesis propounded in this work by the author is that there are many Hebrew words in the Bible which have more than one meaning. The other connotation or connotations were unfortunately lost sight of because of the authority of the exegetic tradition which ascribed to these words only one specific meaning. As a result numerous passages in the Bible offer great difficulties to students, for certain words in them taken in the traditional connotation hardly fit into the context. Modern Biblical scholars consequently often resorted to emendations. The author, however, believes that in many cases there is no need for emendations, provided we could discover a more proper connotation which the words undoubtedly possess and in which sense it was used by the authors of the Bible.

Eitan substantiates his thesis by offering explanation of a considerable number of verses and passages in the Bible in which he obviates the difficulties they present by endowing certain words with a meaning different from the traditional. He elicits the new meanings of the words either by comparison with parallel passages or by citing Arabic words which possess the desired connotation. A large number of his explanations are ingenious and really illuminate the passages, while some are forced. The thesis itself, however, is plausible and his method of exegesis deserves further elaboration. Besides this work, Eitan wrote also several long articles in the annuals of the Hebrew Union College containing exegetic notes to Isaiah and the Minor Prophets.

B. TRANSLATIONS

i. The commentaries are not the only contribution of Margolis to the Biblical studies. He performed a still greater service to the exegesis of the Bible by acting as editor-in-chief of the new English version of the Bible published by the Jewish Publication Society in 1917.

This translation of the Scriptures which represents one of the notable achievements of Jewish scholarship in this country was long in preparation. As early as 1892 the Publication Society took steps towards the preparation of a new translation of the Scriptures. An editorial committee with Marcus Jastrow as chairman was appointed and assignment

of books for translation were given to various scholars in the United States and Great Britain. The work, though, proceeded slowly and in an unsatisfactory manner, and more than a decade passed without definite results. The death of Dr. Jastrow in 1903 delayed the matter still further. It was, however, undertaken anew in 1908 when the new editorial board with Solomon Schechter as chairman and Margolis as editor-in-chief took charge. The task of the editor-in-chief was to prepare the entire manuscript of the translation, while that of the other editors was to revise and make suggestions. For seven years the editors labored at their task until it was finally completed in 1915.

The correction and revision by all the editors were undoubtedly valuable, but the lion's share of this scholarly achievement was that of Margolis. It was he who was primarily responsible for the entire text. This is not the place to survey in detail the numerous qualities of this translation. Suffice it to say that it excels the previous translations even in many technical improvements and frequently even in literary expression, for the editors utilized all the results of scholarly research in regard to the literary aspect of the Bible and incorporated them in the translation. Its chief merits, however, are the genuine Jewish spirit which permeates it and the exegetic ingenuity displayed in it. Every translation is, as is well known, a commentary, and it is on the quality of its exegesis that its value is based. The exegesis of this translation is an amalgam of many elements. The entire field of Biblical study for centuries was drawn upon for the determination of the proper meaning of the verses. All the versions, ancient and modern, were consulted, the Jewish commentaries beginning with that of Saadia and ending with Ehrlich (Sec. 89) were utilized, nor were the commentaries of non-Jews neglected. Likewise was the entire Talmudic and Midrashic literature searched for explanations of verses, and the results of archaeological discoveries as well as of kindred sciences were taken into account. The result of this extensive labor is that many a difficult verse was clarified and many a clouded passage was illuminated, and there was produced for the first time for students of the Bible, both Jews and non-Jews, an authoritative English version expressing in the main the Jewish interpretation of the Scriptures prevalent through the ages.

ii. Another complete translation of the Scriptures produced in this country is the Yiddish version by the poet, Yehoash (S. Bloomgarten), published in 1929. It was undoubtedly a daring undertaking for one man, yet the task was carried out quite successfully, for the translation

excels all previous renderings of the Bible into Yiddish both by its literary quality and by its exegesis. We must, however, not look for originality of interpretation and commentation in this version, for Yehoash was primarily a poet and not a Biblical scholar. Still, his poetic intuition stood him in good stead, for he succeeded in selecting the most plausible explanations of verses from the numerous commentaries and versions which he had consulted. He utilized to a great extent the translation issued by the Jewish Publication Society and he followed its renderings numerous times, especially in difficult passages. He is, on the whole, correct in his translation, but often he employs poetic license and renders difficult verses too freely.⁵ The chief merits of the version are the choice diction and fine style which is distinguished by its precision, clarity, and economy of phraseology. Both of these prove the translator to have been master of his subject. The translation is an important contribution to Yiddish literature.

iii. Attempts were also made by several other Yiddish poets to render into that language single or several books of the Bible. Of these, the noted are the translation of the Book of Psalms by I. Lewin, and the version of the Five Scrolls (Megillot) by Naphtali Gross. Lewin's rendering of the Psalms displays a mastery of the exegesis of that book, for he endeavors to make the meaning of difficult verses clear, while Gross' translation is more literal, but its style has a poetic ring.

C. BIBLICAL STUDIES

i. A bold enterprise in the field of Biblical studies was undertaken by Abraham Hayyim Rosenberg (1838-1923) who, single-handed, compiled an encyclopaedic dictionary of the Bible, entitled *Oẓar ha-Shémoṭ*, in five volumes, which contain close to three thousand pages. The articles of the dictionary bear upon almost every phase and aspect of life, culture, religion, history, geography, and Palestinian topography, as reflected in the Bible. The subjects are treated extensively, and some of the articles are short monographs. It is true that it contains little original investigation, for part of the material is borrowed from similar works in European languages, but the erudition displayed and the mastery of the literature pertaining to the Bible is impressive. It also cannot lay claim to scientific exactness, for many data and views given in the work are antiquated; still, the *Oẓar* has a distinct advantage in certain respects over other dictionaries of this kind. Rosenberg made

⁵ See his rendering of Ezekiel, XXI, 15.

extensive use of Jewish sources, and quotes frequently the views of the Talmud, of leading Jewish commentators, of thinkers, and scholars, on numerous subjects and themes. His attitude towards the Bible is conservative, and from time to time, he attempts to refute radical and critical views. These qualities impart a special value to the work and the student of the Bible may scan its pages with profit.

ii. Other Biblical studies embraced many phases of ancient Jewish life, religion, and culture, and a number of scholars attempted to throw light on these matters. Of these there are to be noted the essays of Julian Morgenstern which appeared in various of scholarly publications. Morgenstern belongs to the school of radical higher critics who view the Pentateuch not only as a composite work consisting of numerous sources, but post-date the Priestly Code which contains most of the ceremonial and festival laws as late as the fourth century B.C.E. This view affords him latitude in dealing with certain aspects of ancient Jewish life and religion. Of his numerous Biblical studies those on the calendar in ancient Israel can serve as the best illustration of his method as well as of his attitude towards the Bible. It is his theory of the calendar, elaborated in several lengthy essays,⁶ which serves him as a basis for his views on the origin and development of the principal festivals and ancillary subjects. The content of the theory is as follows:

There are, says he, three different ways by means of which the Bible refers to the months of the year. Four months are designated by names which, as the North-Semitic inscriptions indicate, were common to the Hebrews, Canaanites, and Phoenicians. At other times, the months are designated by numbers, first, second, etc., while in sixteen passages they are called by Babylonian names. From these he infers that there were in ancient Israel successively three different calendars. And since the calendar of a nation is closely bound up with its festivals, it follows that with the change of calendar there was also a corresponding change in the dates and even rites of the festivals. Morgenstern is aware that the Talmud explains the Babylonian names of the Jewish months as a result of their sojourn in that country during the Exile and attaches little significance to the matter, but he thinks differently.

Accordingly, he proceeds to determine the nature of these calendars. Calendar I, says he, was the solar Canaanitic calendar which the Israelites borrowed from them. This calendar had two principal agricultural festivals celebrated at the time of the two equinoxes, the vernal

⁶ *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. I, pp. 13-78; Vol. III, pp. 77-109.

and the autumnal, which were taken over by the Hebrews, namely the Feast of Mazzot—not Passover, as this name was given to it much later—and that of Succoth (Tabernacles). The first was celebrated at the beginning of the spring months, namely Abib—not from the 14th to the 22nd, as this came later—and the second in the fall for seven days which marked the end of the year, while the day following the Succoth festival, which was the day of the equinox, was celebrated as New Years Day. This calendar, he claims, lasted in Israel up to the year 608 B.C.E. which marks the rise of the power of Babylonia and the extension of its influence over Judah.

Calendar II was introduced between the years 608 and 586 B.C.E. It displays Babylonian influence inasmuch as the year began with the spring and the months were numbered accordingly, but the festivals continued to be celebrated in the ancient manner, namely the Feast of Mazzot on the first seven days of the first month, and Succoth in the fall, in the seventh month, from the third to the ninth, and followed by New Years Day on the tenth day. This calendar, he claims, lasted in Israel for three centuries until the end of the fourth century B.C.E. He asserts that even in the time of Ezra, the festivals were celebrated in the manner stated, while Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement was still unknown.

Calendar III, which is the traditional one and which is still followed by the Jews, began to take shape in the second half of the fourth century. It is lunar, and is distinguished not only by the designation of the months with Babylonian names, but primarily by a change of festivals. New Years Day was shifted to the first of the seventh month and Succoth and the Feast of Mazzot, now called Passover, to the fourteenth of the respective months. Furthermore, the tenth of the seventh month became a new festival, Yom Kippur. The reason for this institution is the reverence of the old folk practice which formerly celebrated this day as New Years. Some of its ritualistic features were, according to Morgenstern, taken over from the former celebration of the New Year which was of pagan origin. It follows, of course, that all passages in the Pentateuch, such as Lev. XXIII, 4-44, Num. XXVIII and XXIX, and Exod. XII, 18-29 where the festivals are fixed in accordance with Calendar III belong to a later layer of the Priestly Code composed during the fourth century B.C.E.

This, in brief, is the theory of this scholar which shatters all traditional conceptions and which is, as said, the basis of many other Bibli-

cal studies.⁷ It is beyond the scope of this work to analyze the arguments by means of which the theory is substantiated. We will only point out a few of its shortcomings. Most of the arguments are *e silentio*, and such a method, as is well known, is far from convincing, for there may be many reasons why a certain fact was omitted. Consequently, the fact that in Nehemiah VIII the celebrations of the festival of the first of the seventh month and Succoth are mentioned and not that of Yom Kippur, and that the festival of the first of the seventh month is not called New Years Day is not conclusive proof that the holidays were celebrated, in the time of Ezra, in the manner described above, nor that Yom Kippur was unknown. There is only one statement in the entire Bible, many to the contrary, which forms the keystone of the entire theory. This is the one in Ezekiel, LX, 1 which reads, "*be-Rosh ha-Shanah*, on the tenth of the month," and this is taken by our scholar as well as by many other Biblical scholars as conclusive proof for the view that New Years was celebrated on the tenth of the seventh month instead of the first. But the words, *Rosh ha-Shanah* may also mean the early part of the year and not necessarily one day. Morgenstern, who frequently prefers the reading of the Septuagint to the Massoretic text, overlooks the fact that this version reads "in the first month" instead of *be-Rosh ha-Shanah*, a fact which makes the reading of the Massoretic text somewhat uncertain; and such an uncertain reading and still more uncertain meaning is hardly sufficient to overthrow a tradition of a nation which is several thousand years old and which is also embodied in many places in the Pentateuch. Ezekiel himself gives the dates of Passover and Succoth on the fifteenth of the respective months, which would prove that Calendar III was already in operation in the sixth century. Morgenstern obviates this difficulty by asserting that this passage is a later insertion, a device used by him too often. Again, many times an unfounded hypothesis is later given as a basis of proof. A more serious objection to this and similar theories is that their propounders hardly take account of life and the forces operating within its sphere. Biblical critics often remind us of the Agadists of the Midrash who take a verse and by homiletic interpretation derive a certain teaching or a legendary embellishment of a historical episode. But while the Agadists were conscious of the unhistoricity of their interpretation the critics turn their verse interpretation into history. In all the long essays on the subject Morgenstern

⁷ See his Amos Studies in *Annual*, Vols. XII-XIV, pp. 1-55.

did not find it necessary to explain what were the conditions in Jewish life which brought about the transitions from one calendar to another. He assigns a period of twenty-two years for the introduction of Calendar II. Are age-old practices of a people changed so suddenly without any sufficient reason? However, this speedy transition may not offer any serious objections, for the differences, with the exception of the change from the solar to the lunar year, are comparatively slight. But Calendar III really introduced fundamental changes in the life and the religion of the people. What then were the causes which brought about such changes? Furthermore, if the case were, as Morgenstern supposes, can we assume that there was no opposition to such drastic changes? But there is not a trace of such opposition in the entire Jewish literature. Morgenstern, however, did not find it necessary to delve into such matters and proceeded to reconstruct ancient Jewish history according to his interpretation of verses and inferences substantiated by slender arguments.

An entirely different spirit prevails in another work of Morgenstern entitled *The Book of Genesis, A Jewish Interpretation*. The book, written in a popular manner, justifies its title. True, the author does not change his critical attitude towards the Pentateuch and does by no means attach historical truth to the account of the lives of the Patriarchs, nor does he neglect to tell us that he considers the stories of creation, the flood, and others, no more than recast primitive folk tales. The interpretation of the stories, however, are genuinely Jewish. With great skill he elicits elevated morals and religious teachings from each part of the book.

The lofty God-idea, His fatherhood of mankind embodied in the story of creation, the divine justice conveyed in the story of the flood, the severe struggles of Abraham in his strivings toward a pure religion, the struggles of Jacob to attain moral ideals, the tests of Joseph and his brethren—all these are brought out with force and vigor. The author, though holding an untraditional view regarding the origin of the content of the Book of Genesis is at one with tradition in fully appreciating the spirit permeating it.

iii. Studies in Jewish law and institutions of government in Biblical times were made by Mayer Sulzberger (d. 1925), a jurist of note who possessed also a fair amount of Jewish knowledge, in his three works, *The 'Am ha-Areẓ*; *The Polity of the Ancient Hebrews*; and *The Ancient Hebrew Law of Homicide*. In the first, he propounded a rather

curious theory, namely that the term '*Am ha-Areẓ*, which is found in the Bible forty-nine times and which all commentators and translators interpret simply as the people of the land, denotes the representative assembly of the people. This assembly, he further says, formed the lower house of the ancient Jewish Parliament which was bi-cameral, the upper house of which is designated by the term *Sarim* (Nobles). He attempts to substantiate his theory by interpretations of numerous Biblical passages many of which are forced and far-fetched.

In the second, he endeavors to trace the development of the Hebrew polity during the period of the Judges which was the formative time of the Jewish nation. He asserts that the Hebrews on entering Palestine and conquering the various city states of that country at first adopted that form of government. As a result there were a number of such small states or cantons established which were ruled by councils, known in the Bible as *Zikné ha-'Ir* (The Elders of the City). These councils adopted many of the native Canaanite laws and struggled to maintain the canton states. Soon, however, the process of unification set in and gradually a central federal government was established which undertook to curb the power of the canton councils and make the law of the Torah dominant in the land. The struggle between the two tendencies in ancient Israel, the centrifugal and the centripetal, continued, according to our author, for a time even after the kingdom was established, and the conflict is primarily reflected in the development of Jewish law of which that of homicide is the most illustrious example.

This forms the theme of Sulzberger's third work. He finds in the laws of homicide, as recorded in the Bible in several places, a number of stages. In the first stage, the jurisdiction over homicide cases was in the hands of the canton councils who often followed the Canaanite law. The subsequent stages show a gradual curbing of the judicial power of the local councils by the federal government until in the time of Jehoshafat the jurisdiction was entirely taken away from them, and federal courts were set up in every canton to hear homicide cases.

Sulzberger unfortunately lacked the proper preparation to establish his theories on a scientific basis, nor did he take into account the Talmudic interpretation of the Biblical laws, treating the legal statements of the Pentateuch independently of Jewish tradition. Furthermore, like all Biblical critics,—he does not explicitly state his espousal of higher criticism but his whole trend of investigation proves it—he commits the mistake of assuming that the editor of the Pentateuch grouped

together contrary strata of a legal system without noticing their incongruity. As a result, there is much of the fantastic and grotesque in his theories, yet his works contain a number of views which are of value and interest. Of these there is to be noted his explanation of the much maligned Biblical statement, "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot," (Ex. XXI, 24), found with slight variations in Deut. XIX, 21 and Lev. XXIV, 20. He says that the statement was never meant to be taken literally. It is merely a legal maxim which aims to convey the idea that a grave offense of assault and battery must be punished in a proportionate manner to the injury sustained by the sufferer by the loss of his limb. That can be accomplished only by a monetary compensation, for a literal execution would bring no relief to the sufferer. He substantiates his view by proofs from the context of the passages where this statement is found.

iv. A number of shorter Biblical studies were made by Samuel Feigin, a scholar armed both with a comprehensive Jewish knowledge and a mastery of Semitic languages. The studies embrace a variety of themes. Some deal with the determination of the connotation of certain words in the Bible, others with historical episodes, and still others contain exegetic notes. Feigin also made important contributions to Biblical knowledge in his numerous reviews, in Hebrew and English, of the works of others which deal with exegesis, ancient Jewish life, history, and culture, in which he frequently corrects erroneous statements and ill-founded theories.

153. ANCIENT VERSIONS AND BIBLICAL HISTORY

The study of ancient versions of the Bible was, likewise, not neglected by American Jewish scholars. Of the works in this field which deserve to be mentioned are: *Prolegomena to a Greek Hebrew and Hebrew Greek Index to Aquila* by Joseph Reider; *The Targum Jonathan to the Prophets* by Pinchas Churgin; and *The Greek Book of Joshua* by Max Margolis.

i. The first, as the title indicates, is an introduction to a larger work undertaken by the author, namely an index or list of all the Greek words found in the numerous fragments of Aquila's Greek version of the Old Testament (Vol. I, Sec. 62) with their Hebrew equivalents, and vice versa, a list of the Hebrew words with the Greek equivalents used by Aquila. The introduction itself, however, is of interest to the students in the field. In it, Reider throws much light on the nature and

character of Aquila's version which was held in great esteem by the *Tannaim* and which was not preserved in its entirety.

In four chapters he discusses Aquila's manner of translation, dwelling especially on his literalness, his knowledge of Hebrew grammar and lexicography, his exegesis, and the text underlying his version. In regard to the latter, he comes to the conclusion that while the text was largely identical with our Massoretic text, yet the translation proves that there were also some different readings in a number of verses. Besides, Aquila often followed the *Ketib* rather than the *Keri*.⁸ Reider substantiates his conclusions by numerous illustrations from the version as given in the many fragments.

ii. Churgin's treatise endeavors to present a comprehensive account of the authority, nature, and character of the Aramaic translation of the Prophets known as *Targum Jonathan*. This title, as is well known, is derived from the fact that a statement in the Babylonian Talmud ascribes it to Jonathan ben Uziel, a disciple of Hillel (Vol. I, Sec. 38). Our author, however, claims that this tradition was not accepted even by the Talmudists, for the Palestinian Talmud while speaking of this *Targum* is silent about it, nor are the quotations from this *Targum* in both Talmuds ever referred to as taken from the *Targum Jonathan*. After discussing other theories regarding its origin and authorship, he comes to the conclusion that there was no single author of the *Targum* of the Prophets, but like that of Onkelos, it developed out of official translations in the synagogue during public worship and slowly these renderings assumed a comparatively unified form. He believes that a large part of this *Targum* hails from early times and finds in some renderings of verses references to events which took place before the destruction of the Temple. Some of his suggestions, however, are forced. He further asserts that the *Targum* underwent considerable transformation; in the course of time various renderings were discarded and others substituted.

Of value are the chapters dealing with the variations in the text from that of the Massoretic which underlies the renderings of the *Targum*, the method of exegesis, and its general peculiarities. In regard to the last feature, Churgin points out the care exercised by the translators in distinguishing between the holy and the profane when the Hebrew applies the same term to both. Thus *Elohim* is used in the Bible both of God and idols; the *Targum* invariably differentiates between the

⁸ On *Ketib* and the *Keri* see Vol. I, Sec. 91.

two and translates the word according to the real meaning. Similarly, he makes a distinction in the use of the word *Nabi* whether it is applied to a true or false prophet, and similar distinctions are employed in many more cases. The work, as a whole, elucidates many phases of this important version which was esteemed highly by leading commentators.

iii. The third is a scientific edition of the Greek version of the Book of Joshua in which the text is given according to the best manuscripts available. The editor in his numerous notes offers many emendations and various readings found in the different manuscripts. The work which is strictly technical displays great erudition and mastery in the field of the Greek Bible translation.

Margolis also wrote a popular book entitled *The Story of Bible Translations*, in which he gives a brief but comprehensive survey of all Bible translations through the ages, beginning with the Aramaic *Targum* and ending with that of the Jewish Publication Society. The work, in spite of its popular tone and brevity, is distinguished, like other works of this scholar, by its thoroughness. Not only is the story of the versions told, but the author gives succinct characterizations of each of them, and also points out the influence exerted by the great Mediaeval Jewish commentators upon such important versions as those of Luther and King James.

iv. An important study dealing both with Biblical history as well as with the nature and character of one of the books of the Bible is J. Hoschander's *The Book of Esther*. This book, which tells the story of the Feast of Purim, formed the subject of many treatises by Biblical scholars from the eighteenth century on. Many of the scholars who are inclined towards the critical view denied the historicity of the event as told in the Book and considered the story fiction. Hoschander undertook to vindicate the writer of Esther from these charges and prove that the event actually took place, though the circumstances were somewhat different than they are usually believed to have been. The gist of his theory is as follows.

The persecution of the Jews took place, according to him, in the time of Artaxerxes II who reigned from 404 to 359 B.C.E. The name Ahasuerus which is usually identified with Xerxes is a fictitious one used by the writer in order to conceal the real name of the king so as not to arouse animosity on the part of the Persians who considered Artaxerxes II one of their beloved rulers. This persecution, avers the author, was

primarily a religious one undertaken by Haman as a policy of state and not out of animosity towards one individual, Mordecai, as told in the Scroll. At that time, says he, quoting a statement of Berossus, the earliest Persian historian, the Persian Empire fell into a state of disorganization, and in order to strengthen the bonds of the Empire Haman conceived the idea of reintroducing the worship of the goddess, Anatha, revered by the people, but was discarded by the Zoroastrian religion, the one followed by the king and the higher stratum of Persian society. The decree went forth that all nations of the Empire should pay homage to this goddess. The Jews, of course, refused to obey this decree and were consequently threatened with punishment. It was then that Mordecai, though an assimilated Jew, was aroused to save his brethren, and he accomplished his purpose through his cousin, Esther, and through the waywardness of the king. The personal animosity between him and Haman formed only an incident in the episode but not the cause of the persecution. The Scroll, asserts our author, was written by one of the *Soferim* in Babylonia before the conquest of Persia by Alexander. His purpose was to save the character of Purim which was celebrated by the Jews as a secular festival and began to resemble in ceremonies and customs a similar pagan festival. In order to give Purim at least a semi-religious character, Mordecai and Esther, the principal characters in that drama, were invested by the writer with more piety than they really possessed.

Hoschander elaborates his theory in great detail and with much skill attempts to explain the particulars of the event recorded in the Scroll in a manner compatible with his view. In places where such was impossible he resorts to the usual method of declaring the text defective. He, however, displays much learning in the development of his arguments and in its substantiation by proofs from many sources, especially from classical writers dealing with Persian history. His purpose to save the honor of the Book of Esther is certainly a worthy one and his theory as a whole, notwithstanding that some of its details are far-fetched, is of interest.

v. A historical and critical study of an important event in Biblical history was made by Leo Honor in his work, *Sennacherib's Invasion of Palestine*. There are two versions of this event, the Biblical records in II Kings, XVIII, 13-36, Isaiah, XXXVI, XXXVII, and II Chronicles, XXXII, 1-23, and the Assyrian Annals of Sennacherib. The versions do not agree, for while the Bible records the miraculous defeat of the

King's army, the Annals tell only of victory. Honor reviews all sources and discusses the various theories advanced by Semitic scholars on the subject but offers no theory of his own. He also attempts to determine the dates of the various prophecies of Isaiah in regard to Assyria. The book throws light on the problems connected with this episode and is of great interest to the students of Biblical history.

154. GRAMMAR AND LEXICOGRAPHY

i. In the field of grammar and lexicography there are to be noted besides a number of studies in Hebrew and Aramaic philology, published in learned periodical publications, two grammars of the Aramaic of the Babylonian Talmud and several Hebrew dictionaries. The grammatical works are *A Manual of the Grammar of the Babylonian Talmud* by Max Margolis and the *Dikduk Aramit Bablit* by Caspar Levias. Margolis' grammar which was published also in German is, on the whole, brief and is divided into three parts, the first dealing with phonetics, the second with the etymology of the nouns and verbs and their respective declensions and conjugations and the particles; the third formulates the rules of syntax governing the formation of sentences. It also contains a chrestomathy consisting of selections from various parts of the Talmud, especially from the Agadic portions and a vocabulary.

Levias' treatise is larger quantitatively and of a more technical nature and is the result of many years of labor. He composed a short grammar of the Babylonian Talmud while yet a student at the University which was published in 1900. Since then he continued to labor in the field and produced the Hebrew work. It deals with all phases of grammar in great detail. Of special value are his two long chapters on phonetics and syntax. The first embraces also the theories of vocalization and assimilation of consonants and their various changes and metamorphoses. The second gives a complete statement of this rather difficult subject and notes all its deviations and formations. The work is an important contribution to Aramaic philology and conduces much to a better understanding of the text of the Talmud.

ii. A scholar whose studies in the field of Hebrew grammar have a ring of originality was Phineas Mordell (1861-1934). In a number of essays in Hebrew and in English the noted of which is *The Origin of Letters and Numerals* which is based on an unusual interpretation of the mystical *Sefer Yezirah* (Book of Creation, Vol. I, Sec. 182), he ex-

presses several revolutionary views on the subject. The important of these are the following. He rejects the theory held by all grammarians that all Hebrew letters were originally consonants, and that the symbols for vowels had to be invented in order to facilitate the reading, and asserts that the language did possess vowels. These were the letters, *Aleph*, *'Ain*, *Wow*, *Yod*, and as for the symbolic vowel signs he claims that they were introduced under the influence of the Arabic. He further insists that the *Dagesh* and the *Shewa* were introduced by teachers long before the invention of the vowel signs. The first was invented for the purpose either of making reading easier in certain cases as in the six letters, *Bet*, *Gimel*, *Dalet*, *Kaf*, *Pé*, *Taw*, which have double pronunciation, or to indicate the form of the conjugation as in case of the *Piel*, or to designate the omission of a root letter, as in the verbs which have in their root a double letter (Kefulim) and are omitted in conjugation. The second (Shewa) simply designated a plain consonant. With the introduction of the vowel signs, much of the usefulness of the *Dagesh* was lost except in the above-named six letters. He therefore proposes to abolish many of the grammatical rules about these two signs and the differentiations invented between a weak and strong *Dagesh* or mobile and quiescent Shewa. He based some of his theories upon the *Book of Creation* which he considered the oldest Hebrew grammatical work declaring the many mystical passages later interpretations of the older text.

Unfortunately Mordell did not work out his theories in a systematic way, nor are all his works published. The earnest student, however, will find in his published essays much that will help him to form a better view of certain aspects of Hebrew grammar.

iii. Among the several dictionaries compiled in this country there is to be noted first the *Milon Angli-Ibri* (English Hebrew Dictionary), compiled by B. Silk, Israel Efros, and Judah Kaufman, the last one acting also as editor. The dictionary contains around fifty thousand words and is a contribution to Hebrew lexicography, for much labor and erudition was invested in its compilation. It was a difficult task to find Hebrew equivalents not only for many English words which convey modern concepts and for many technical terms, but also for nuances and changes of meaning which are connoted by the same words when prefixes are added to them. The compilers, in overcoming the obstacles, searched the extensive Hebrew literature of the ages, made use of the newly-coined words suggested by various scholars,

and at times coined words themselves. They were fortunate to have the advice and coöperation of Ḥayyim Naḥman Bialik whose knowledge of the treasures of literature was all-embracing and who possessed an intuitive and penetrating sense into the essence and character of Hebrew expression.

The philologist, Caspar Levias, undertook to write a dictionary of Hebrew philological terms of a comprehensive character which was supposed to contain all terms used in grammar, phonetics, poetics, rhetoric, argumentation, exegesis, criticism, and kindred subjects. However, only two instalments of this proposed great work appeared dealing with a number of grammatical terms.

Dictionaries compiled by other scholars are a Yiddish-English-Hebrew Dictionary by A. Harkavy and the *Aruk ha-Kozar* by S. Chones. Both are intended for popular use. The first gives the English and Hebrew equivalents for a large number of Yiddish words. The second contains about eight thousand words found in Talmudic and Midrashic literature, explained briefly in Hebrew and Yiddish.

155. TALMUDICS, RABBINICS, AND JEWISH LAW

With the turn of the century there was noted an intensive and extensive activity in the field of Jewish scholarship, especially in the branches of Talmudics and Rabbínics. The causes which brought about the rise of Jewish learning to a higher level were the publication of the Jewish Encyclopaedia, on the one hand, and the reorganization of the Jewish Theological Seminary, on the other hand. Both these events resulted in the arrival and settlement in this country of a number of Jewish scholars who had already made their debut in European countries and who continued their work in their new home.

A. TALMUDICS AND RABBINICS

i. Of these scholars whose arrival acted as a stimulant to Jewish studies, the foremost in extent of influence was Solomon Schechter (1848-1915). The biography of this scholar and his activities in this country are too well known and were treated in numerous articles and in a special biographical book,⁹ and need not be repeated here. The great contribution of Schechter to Jewish learning does not consist entirely in his works which are of great importance, but also to a large degree in his personality, in his love of, and devotion to, Jewish scholar-

⁹ *Solomon Schechter* by Norman Bentwich, Philadelphia, 1939.

ship which resulted in the discovery of the *Genizah*, that mine of Jewish lore and store-house of historical and literary documents. Had Schechter done nothing more but discover the *Genizah*, his name would have been perpetuated in the annals of scholarship, for as was stated above (Sec. 88), it opened a new epoch in the development of Jewish studies; however, he also accomplished much for the cause of learning by his numerous works in various fields. For the present we will survey his contributions to Talmudics and Rabbinics. These consist primarily in his editions of several Agadic Midrashim and treatises and of collections of documents from the *Genizah* bearing upon the literature of the Gaonic period and the history and views of sects in Israel.¹⁰

The earliest of his works of this type is his edition of the *Abot di-Rabbi Nathan*, an Agadic treatise containing the Mishnaic tractate of *Abot* with an extensive *Gemarah* which was ascribed to Rabbi Nathan, a *Tanna*, an older contemporary of Judah the Prince, the redactor of the Mishnah. This treatise was usually printed together with the Babylonian Talmud, but the version was defective. Schechter edited the text on the basis of several manuscripts which offered many improved readings. In addition, he published for the first time a second version of this treatise which is found in a single manuscript in the Vatican. This version was known to some of the earlier scholars but was lost sight of. He also added an introduction and numerous notes and comments. In the introduction he discusses the nature, origin, and authorship of this ethical treatise. Scholars had doubted the authorship of Rabbi Nathan, and Schechter, after reviewing the views of other scholars, comes to the conclusion that the treatise is based on the Mishnah of Rabbi Nathan of the tractate *Abot* which was different from that of Judah, but the extensive *Gemarah* or *Tosefta* was composed by later Agadists in the generation after the redaction of the Mishnah when Nathan's version was still current along with that of the standard text of Judah, and hence its title *Abot di-Rabbi Nathan*. This was followed by scientific editions of the *Midrash ha-Gadol*, an Agadic miscellany originated in Yemen, on Genesis, and *Agadot Shir ha-Shirim*, a Midrash on Canticles, both of which were unknown before.¹¹ Shorter studies of his contain publications of *Genizah* fragments of a Halakic Midrash on Exodus which became known as the *Mekilta di Rabbi Shimeon*, a *Tanna* of the fourth generation, a disciple of Rabbi Akiba. In all these

¹⁰ For his edition of the Hebrew, *Ben Sira*, see Sec. 93.

¹¹ On the nature of the *Midrash ha-Gadol*, see Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 517-518.

editions the comprehensive erudition and the great mastery of Agadic literature by the editor is displayed in the learned notes and comments.

The works of the second class comprise the *Saadyana* and *The Documents of Jewish Sectaries*, Parts I and II. The first is an edition of a collection of fragments from the *Genizah* relating to the works and activities of the Gaon, Saadia. They contain a lost work, a part of his Responsa and letters, liturgical pieces, and *Piyyutim*, and references by other scholars to Saadia's work. Of his letters, some are of special value as they bear upon the controversy between Saadia and Ben Meir, head of the Palestinian Academy, about the question as to who has the authority regarding fixation of the calendar, whether the Palestinian scholars or the Babylonian Geonim. This controversy was entirely unknown before. A longer document included in the collection, though it does not bear on Saadia, called *Megillat Ebiatar* (The Roll of Ebiatar) tells us of a similar struggle for authority in the eleventh century. The writer, Ebiatar, who describes himself as the Gaon of the Jerusalem Academy, relates the struggle which went on for several generations between the Jerusalem Geonim and the Davidic descendants who claimed the right of Nasi, i.e. Patriarch. It began in Palestine and spread to Egypt. The Nasi, David ben Daniel, who opposed Ebiatar, went to Egypt, proclaimed himself Exilarch and claimed full authority over Egyptian Jewry. Ebiatar, in his Roll, championed the right of the Palestinian Geonim to exclusive jurisdiction over Egypt. Both documents throw much light on Jewish life in Palestine during a dark period which Schechter was the first to illuminate and he was followed by many others.

Part I of the *Documents of Jewish Sectaries* contains documents of a very early sect which existed during the Second Commonwealth. It is of exceptional value for the understanding of the development of Judaism during that period. The interpretation of Schechter of the nature of the sect aroused much discussion at the time and created a miniature literature.¹² Part II consists of a large section of the *Book of Precepts* of Anan, founder of the Karaite sect (Vol. I, Sec. 183), recovered from the *Genizah* and was unknown. It added much to the understanding of the Karaite schism. Thus Schechter enriched our knowledge of the literature and life of two important periods in Jewish history.

ii. Of greater comprehensiveness and distinguished by its erudition

¹² See Vol. I, 2nd ed. pp. 503-511.

and originality is the manifold contribution of Louis Ginzberg (1872) to the fields of Talmudics and Rabbinics. In fact, the erudition of this gifted scholar is all-embracing and practically covers the entire domain of Jewish knowledge, for he also delved into Jewish philosophy and mysticism and his additions to the philosophical works of others and his numerous articles in the Jewish Encyclopaedia dealing with these subjects elucidate many of their phases. However, his forté are the above-mentioned fields.

His contributions to these branches of learning can be divided into three classes: (a) studies bearing on the Mishnah and the Talmud, especially the Palestinian; (b) those dealing with the literature of the Gaonic period; and (c) those devoted to the Agada. To the first belong his *Seridé ha-Yerushalmi* (Yerushalmi Fragments); his essays, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Mischnah* (Investigation in the Origin of the Mishnah); *The Mishnah Tamid; Some Abbreviations Unrecognized or Misunderstood in the Text of the Jerusalem Talmud*; and *Beiträge zur Lexicographie des aramäischen*, besides shorter studies.

The first of these works is an edition of a large number of fragments from the Palestinian Talmud found in the *Genizah*. These manuscript fragments offer numerous readings in the text of this Talmud different from those contained in the printed edition, which in many places conduce to a better understanding of the passages. The editor gives below the *Genizah* text the readings contained in the printed version. He also prepared, as he states in the preface, commentaries on the part of the *Yerushalmi* contained in the fragments and extensive notes, but thus far they have not yet been published. The essay on the abbreviations in the Palestinian Talmud throws much light on many difficult passages in that Talmud which baffled many a commentator.

In the *Entstehungsgeschichte*, an essay on the origin of the Mishnah, Ginzberg corroborated the view first propounded by Hoffmann that parts and layers of the Mishnah date from the period preceding the destruction of the Temple. In it he proves that there were in vogue older collections of *Halakot* grouped together by means of a form of expression which served as a mnemonic sign. The content is varied but the form is similar. The redactor of the Mishnah incorporated such collections on account of their antiquity, though he did not always agree with the decisions of a number of *Halakot*. In the *Mishnah Tamid* he proves that the tractate bearing that name which deals with the daily order of the Temple service as well as that of *Midot* giving a descrip-

tion of the Temple did not form part of the Mishnah of Judah the Prince, but were composed earlier, immediately after the destruction of the Temple, and were included in our Mishnah after the death of the redactor. The essay on Aramaic lexicography elucidates the meaning of numerous words and expressions found in the Babylonian Talmud.

The second class consists primarily of his *Geonica* in two parts, published in 1909 and the *Ginzé Schechter*, bearing also the English title, *Genizah Studies in Memory of Dr. Solomon Schechter*, in two volumes. The first part of the *Geonica* deals with important phases of the history of the Gaonic period and also presents a critical survey of the Gaonic literature. It is an historical and literary contribution of the first order, for Ginzberg sheds much light on many knotty problems which this rather dark period presents, such as the proper conception of the institution of the Gaonate, the chronology of the Geonim and the reconciliations of the contradictions in the only two sources of the history of that period, the *Letter of Sherira* and the report of Nathan the Babylonian (Vol. I, Secs. 189, 190). The literary survey is of special value, for not only does it give the nature and the character of the principal works and determines their authorship, but also discusses important phases of the development of the standard liturgy and the changes between the Palestinian and Babylonian rituals, besides many ancillary problems.

The second part consists of an edition of a large number of Gaonic Responsa from the *Genizah* which deal with numerous Halakic subjects. The Responsa are divided into groups and each group is preceded with an introduction by the editor wherein he discusses its content and the problems offered therein. The introductions clarify many points which are referred to in the Responsa. The work as a whole displays not only mastery of Rabbinic literature but also originality in the solutions presented by the author to many a baffling problem which this period presents.

In the *Ginzé Schechter*, Ginzberg continues the work he began in the *Geonica*. The first volume of this work consists of a large number of fragments containing parts of various Midrashim and Agadic collections, while the second contains numerous Gaonic Responsa, fragments from Karaite Halakic works, and a part of a Gaonic code known as *Pirké ben Baboi* (Vol. I, 2nd ed., 523). This large mass of literary material of variegated content was not only organized and annotated by the editor, but as in the second part of the *Geonica*, prefixed with

introductions which impart exceptional value to the work, for some of them are veritable monographs on specific subjects. The introductions of the first volume deal primarily with the authorship, nature, and character of a number of Midrashim, and elucidate many phases of this type of literature. Of particular importance is his essay on the Midrash known as *Yelamdenu* (Vol. I, Sec. 83) at the end of Volume I, which is a detailed monograph on the subject and in which he propounds the theory that this particular Midrash in its original version was probably the earliest Midrash, composed even before *Bereshit Rabba*. The introductions in the second volume deal primarily with Halakic literature emanating from Gaonic schools, and throw much light on numerous problems, legal, historical and cultural. Of special merit is the long introduction to *Pirké ben Baboi* which deals with such important matters as the place of sacred poetry (Piyyut) in the rituals of Babylonia and Palestine, and the variation of religious customs in these two countries. Ginzberg proves that these variations arose because the Palestinians followed the authority of the *Yerushalmi*, while the Babylonians, that of their own Talmud. It took a long time until uniformity was established in Jewry and until the Babylonian Talmud became fully authoritative even in Palestine. The erudition displayed in these introductions is of the widest character, for there is hardly a phase of *Halakah*, Agada, and ancillary subjects on which the editor does not comment upon and elucidate in his numerous discussions.

To the third class of works belong the *Haggadah bei den Kirchenvätern* (The Agada in the Works of the Christian Fathers) and his magnum opus, *The Legends of the Jews*. The former work is in two parts; the first deals with Agadic elements and interpretations found primarily in the *Quaestiones* which contain comments on the historical books of the Bible, from Joshua to Chronicles, and are ascribed to Jerome though they are really not his, and hence are called pseudo-Hieronymus; and the second treats of the Agada as presented both in the Commentaries of the Fathers on the Pentateuch and also in the Apocrypha. In the preface to the first part, the author states that his purpose is to prepare material for a history of the Agada which should outline its development and spread both among Jews and non-Jews. In his work, he proves the antiquity of many Agadic interpretations, legends, and stories, in spite of the fact that these are often found in later Midrashim. The very same stories, legends, and interpreta-

tions were quoted by the Fathers centuries before the Midrashim were compiled. This proves that while the collections were compiled later, the material they contain is old. In his usual comprehensive way, Ginzberg cites numerous parallels to each Agadic statement in the works of the Fathers from the extensive Talmudic, Midrashic, and Hellenistic literatures. He also notes a number of Agadic interpretations and legends quoted by the Fathers to which there are no parallels in Midrashic literature which proves that the Agada was not preserved by the Jews in its entirety.

The Legends of the Jews is the crown of his works. Its seven volumes prove the exceptionally wide scope of learning which the author mastered. It is both a popular and an intensively scholarly work. The first four volumes contain all the legends, stories, views, and maxims found in the two millennial literature of the Jews in all languages, as well as in the allied Patristic or Islamic literature, regarding the important episodes and personages of the Bible from Genesis to Esther. This enormous mass of material of various colors and hues drawn from hundreds of sources is masterfully organized in accordance with a logical and systematic scheme.

The thousands of notes contained in two bulky volumes reveal to us the enormous labor which went into the compilation of the legends. The notes are intended for the scholar. They supply him not only with numerous sources from which the legends and stories are drawn, but hundreds of parallels in the entire Rabbinic and pseudepigraphic literature. They throw light on the narrative part of the Agada in its various metamorphoses through the centuries, and depict the reflection of the content of the Bible in the "popular mind" of the Jews. They contain even more, such as a number of studies on important books of the Pseudepigrapha and on the works of Philo and their relation to the Agada and illuminating discussions of phases of religious thought as reflected in the works which served as sources for the legends. These notes in their entirety form a vast storehouse of learning to which students can resort frequently for instruction.

iii. A scholar who enriched the field of Talmudics, especially in its Halakic phase, is Jacob Z. Lauterbach (b. 1873). He began his work by contributing a large number of articles dealing with Halakic subjects to the Jewish Encyclopaedia, some of which are distinguished by the comprehensiveness and erudition displayed in them. Of his larger works there are to be noted his *Pharisees and Sadducees*, *Midrash*

and *Mishnah*, the edition of the *Mekilta*, and his essay, *The Ethics of the Halakah*.

In the first work he propounds an interesting theory of the rise and nature of these two parties in ancient Jewry, a subject which was discussed by many scholars, both Jews and non-Jews. His principal thesis is that the concept "Oral Law" was unknown in Jewry prior to the rise of the Pharisees, and he explains its rise and the fundamental differences between the two parties in the following manner. Following Geiger (Vol. III, Sec. 78), he assumes that the Sadducees were a priestly party while the Pharisees were led by lay teachers, and like him, he also minimizes the gap between the two factions and asserts that the Sadducees also had *Halakot* and respected tradition. In fact, says he, they were the followers of the *Soferim*. He avers that the *Soferim* were priests and for a long time interpreted the law to make it suit conditions, and even changed the text, when necessary, to find room for their interpretation. However, these priestly teachers believed that only they had the right to interpret the law and, if necessary, make new laws, for they believed that the law as embodied in the Torah is not all sufficient to meet the changing conditions of life and that permission is given to them to decree regulations. These decrees, however, they considered temporary and did not attribute to them eternal validity. This validity was assigned by them only to the explicit law of the Torah. Furthermore, the authority of the Torah was, in their opinion, based on the oath which the Jews took in the time of Ezra to observe the Torah.

For a long time there was no rift in Israel. The priestly teachers, the *Soferim* and their followers, taught and interpreted the Torah. Gradually, due to changes in political conditions under the early Greek rule, lay scholars arose who disputed the right of the priests to act as sole interpreters of the Torah or makers of new laws. In order to fortify their contention they asserted that the Torah is all sufficient to regulate life provided you know how to interpret it. They thus widened the methods of interpretation and further strengthened their contention by declaring the Torah of divine origin and making this as the basis of its authority and not the agreement of the people. Interpretation, however, even in the wide sense, could not meet all religious exigencies of life as there were many customs and ceremonies adopted by the people for which a basis could not have been found in the law itself and they were practiced as traditions. The

lay teachers were then faced with a problem, namely, to maintain that the Torah is all sufficient and yet declare the validity of traditional practices. They then evolved the theory of the Oral Law, namely, that these laws were also given to Moses and consequently are of equal authority.

The priestly teachers whose authority was challenged contested the widened method of interpretation and the notion of Oral Law. They respected tradition and sanctioned most of the practices ascribed to it, but they gave their origin as enactments of earlier priestly teachers, and even reserved for themselves the right to abrogate them. On the other hand, to the laws explicitly stated in the Torah, they applied a more limited interpretation and repudiated the wider form employed by the lay teachers by means of which they often mitigated their rigor. It is the difference between the attitudes and views of these groups of teachers which ultimately gave rise, when other factors came into play, to the two parties, the Sadducees and the Pharisees. It is through this theory that Lauterbach attempts to solve the problem, why we have so few reported differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees in regard to *Halakot* or practices, while the latter are reputed to have denied the entire Oral Law. According to the theory, we are allowed to assume that the Sadducees agreed to the practice of many customs and ceremonies which are not stated in the Torah on the basis of tradition which they revered but denied them absolute authority since they could be abrogated. That with the entry of a political factor, the gap between the two parties became wider goes without saying.

Lauterbach applies the main principles of this theory to the solution of an important problem in the history of the *Halakah* in his treatise, *Midrash and Mishnah*. As is well known there were two methods in stating *Halakot* or rules of religious practice. One was that of Midrash in which both the statement and its derivation were given, and that of Mishnah where only the abstracted statement was given. The first was the older method and the problem is when did the change from Midrash to Mishnah take place? The problem was much discussed and various solutions were offered. Lauterbach asserts that the change was made when the lay teachers began to assume ascendancy. The teachers, when they could not find Scriptural proof for practices of the people, began to formulate the statements of these practices in Mishnah form, thus making it a part of the Oral Law

which they raised to a status equal to that of the written. This method arose, according to him, in the pre-Maccabean period. In time it extended to such practices for which proof could be found but was contested. He supports his theory by the fact that the first Mishnaic *Halakot* we find in the Talmud are given in the name of José ben Yoezer who lived during the Maccabean uprising, and no proof is offered for them. As the strife between the Sadducees and Pharisees developed, the use of the Mishnaic form was widened, for the Pharisaic leaders did not want to offer any proof which could be challenged by the Sadducees and preferred to give their *Halakot* the status of the Oral Law. Similarly, many other *Halakot* were taught in the Mishnaic form, though proofs were given for them; since these proofs were a matter of contest, one school gave one proof and a second offered another. Gradually, the Mishnaic form gained ascendancy and was used even for such *Halakot* for which Scriptural proof was valid.

Both of these related theories are somewhat forced. It is hard to imagine that such an important concept as Oral Law should have been invented as a device in a partisan struggle. Likewise, it is difficult to accept his view for the origin of the Mishnah, for some Mishnaic statements or *Halakot* for which there is valid proof, and there is even ground that the Sadducees accepted them, go back to Soferic times when there was no division between the teachers. Yet the theories arouse our interest by their ingenuity and by the erudition displayed in their substantiation.

His edition and translation into English of the *Mekilta*, the Tannaitic Halakic Midrash on Exodus, is a notable work. The text was edited after a number of manuscripts and offers many improved readings. The translation is lucid and clear and the occasional notes clarify the meaning of the passages which they refer to. It is to be regretted that the editor was too sparing in his notes, as numerous difficult passages remain obtruse. The introduction discusses the nature, date, and redaction of the Midrash. He admits that the Midrash originated in the School of Rabbi Ishmael, but the version before us is not the original one, as the *Mekilta* underwent many revisions and editions. One of the editions was apparently made in the school of Johanan bar Naphha, leading Palestinian *Amora*. The last redactor, who probably lived in late Amoraic times, incorporated in the Midrash material from the School of Akiba.

Lauterbach wrote also a number of essays dealing with the ethics

of the *Halakāh* and with certain phases of Jewish folklore, such as the history of the customs of *Tashlik* and *Kaporot*, and the naming of children. Of these, the first is of special value, as it gives a clear presentation of the ethical spirit dominating the *Halakāh* as reflected in its civil and social laws.

iv. Important contributions to the fields of Talmudics, Rabbinics, and Jewish Law were made by Hayyim Tchernowitz (1870). He wrote numerous essays in Hebrew and a few in German dealing with various subjects in these branches, and also a number of works which discuss important phases of Talmudics and Rabbinics. Of the noted are the essay, *le-Toldot ha-Shulḥan Aruk we-Hitpashtuto* (The History of the Shulḥan Aruk and Its Acceptance in Jewry); the treatises, *Shiurim be-Talmud* (Model Lessons in Talmud) and *ha-Talmud*; and finally, the *Toldot ha-Halakāh* (The History of the Halakah), in two volumes.

In the first, the author, after surveying briefly the history of the codification of the law in Jewry and the various types of codes which originated in the two centers, the Spanish and the Franco-German, devotes himself primarily to the *Shulḥan Aruk* (Vol. II, Sec. 58), the final code. He discusses extensively the conditions of the time which gave rise to the need for such a code, its relation to the *Tur*, the Code of Jacob ben Asher (Ibid., Sec. 57), and primarily the opposition to its acceptance on the part of the German and the Polish scholars. Of great interest is his defense of Moses Isserlis (Vol. II, Sec. 60), the one who completed Karo's code by his glosses and additions. Isserlis was for a long time the target of attack by the writers of the Haskalah period who blamed him for excessive rigors in Jewish law. Tchernowitz shows, on the contrary, that he was of a liberal trend of mind and that the number of leniencies he introduced exceeds the severities, and furthermore, that severities contained in his glosses were not his but those which were practiced by the German-Polish Jewries for centuries. He was merely the mouthpiece of these Jewries who had a different attitude towards certain phases of religious law than the Spanish Jewry as represented by Karo. It was, says the author, the glosses of Isserlis and later the commentaries of Shabbatai Cohen and David ha-Levi (Shak and Taz, Vol. II, Sec. 65) which brought about the acceptance of the *Shulḥan Aruk* by all Israel.

The *Shiurim* consists of two parts; the first is an introduction to

the tractate *Baba Kama* of the Talmud, and the second is an historical and scientific commentary on the first four chapters of that tractate. The introduction is in reality a treatise on a portion of civil law treated in *Baba Kama*, such as the laws of damages, theft, and robbery. Tchernowitz analyzes the principal legal concepts underlying the individual laws, and discusses with great skill classification of the laws and the various stages of their development from Biblical to Talmudic times. From time to time, he introduces a comparison between Jewish and allied systems of law, such as those of Hammurabi and the Roman. He displays not only mastery of Talmudic knowledge but also of legal science in general. The second part throws much light upon the order of the *Mishnayot* in the chapters discussed and their logical connection, and analyzes the content of each *Mishnah* and the various interpretations placed upon it in the discussion of the *Gemarah*. The essay on the Talmud is a popular and succinct but comprehensive survey of the origin, rise, and development of the Talmud in both its parts, the *Mishnah* and the *Gemarah*.

In the *Toldot ha-Halakah*, Tchernowitz attempted a daring undertaking, namely to give a history of the Oral Law in all its ramifications from early times to the close of the Mediaeval period. It was intended to consist of many volumes, but thus far only the first two have appeared. These are devoted to the Biblical period.

The author treats the subject on a very wide scale, for his purpose is, as he says in the preface, to give the history not, as most of his predecessors did, of the creators of the *Halakah* but of the *Halakah* itself in all its various metamorphoses through all the ages. Following Weiss who asserted that the Oral Law is not the creation of the Great Assembly or the *Soferim*, but that its roots go deep into the life of the nation in very early times, he elaborates this thesis in a wider way and avers that some parts of the Oral Law preceded even the written. In general, his view is that both the written and the Oral Law are two branches issuing from one stem, which is tradition based on the way of life of the people, their customs, and practices; and further that the written law embodied in the Pentateuch by Moses did not contain all the laws which regulated that life, but only a part of them. Much was left to custom and practice, for no code can cover all phases of law in relation to life. True, the written law held for a long time prime authority, but the Oral also had its claim for preservation, and in fact, was preserved by the bearers of tradition, the representatives of

which, in Biblical times, were the prophets. The Oral Law, of course, received new accretions through the ages and ultimately acquired authority equal to that of the written, but its fundamental strata were in existence in olden times.

To the substantiation of this view, the larger part of the volumes is devoted. The arrangement of the material is not always logical but on the whole systematic. The first volume comprises five portals or sections, the first portal dealing with the fundamental terms of the *Halakāh*; the second, with the views on the Oral Law of all leading scholars, ancient, Mediaeval, and modern; the third, with the legal basis and sources of the Oral Law; the fourth, with the traditions and customs of early times which find fuller expression in the later phase of the Oral Law; and the fifth, with the fundamental views of the Jewish people on life and its attitude to other nations.

The second volume deals more extensively with the phases of *Halakāh* in Biblical times. His general thesis is that there were three factors in the shaping of the law in those days, the kings or the political, the priests, and the prophets. Each of these exerted an influence on the application of the *Halakāh* to life. The first two were more of a practical trend, while the prophetic injected a spiritual and moral note. The later *Halakāh* carried on the prophetic tendency, but the other factors also left traces. In consonance with his view to antedate many phases of the fully developed Oral Law and trace them to early origins, he even carries back the beginning of the division between the Pharisees and the Sadducees to the time of the First Commonwealth. He substantiates his theory with skill, but frequently the arguments are far-fetched.¹⁸ A considerable part of the volumes contain discussions not strictly relevant to the subject, such as extensive explanations of certain episodes in Biblical history, of forms of Jewish life and kindred matters. These, though, are of interest, for the author skilfully overthrows many theories of the Biblical critics built on slender foundations and propounds his own views which are genuinely Jewish. The volumes are an important contribution to the history of the Oral Law and it is to be regretted that the work was not continued.

B. EDITIONS, INTRODUCTIONS, AND MONOGRAPHS

i. Of the editions of Talmudic texts, there is to be noted first, that of the tractate, *Ta'anit*, by Henry Malter. It is a model edition of

¹⁸ For criticism of his view, see Vol. I, 2nd ed., pp. 491-493.

an ancient text in the fullest sense of the term, for it is executed in the best scientific and critical manner, as it is based on a collation of twenty-one manuscripts of that tractate, complete or fragmentary. In addition, the editor consulted also excerpts quoted in commentaries and other Rabbinic works and selected the best readings. As a result, the text of the tractate presented in this work excels much the one contained in the ordinary printed Talmud. The editor introduced also other improvements, such as the elimination of numerous abbreviations which proved baffling to readers and often led to misunderstanding of passages and the correction of the orthography, especially in the Hebrew portions. A valuable feature is the complete references to parallel passages in the entire Talmudic and Midrashic literatures which are given on each page beneath the text. The old *Massoret ha-Shas* of the Printed Talmud gives reference only to the parallels found in the Babylonian Talmud.

The edition is accompanied by an excellent English translation and numerous notes of exegetic and historical character. This work was intended for the large public, but Malter prepared also another edition for scholars which contains a comprehensive introduction, lengthy notes on important matters, and the critical apparatus, all in Hebrew. It is still in manuscript.

ii. An indefatigable worker in the field of editions of Talmudic texts, both Halakic and Agadic, is Michael Higger. He specialized in editing a number of smaller tractates which really do not belong to the Talmud proper but are usually appended at the end of the order *Nezekin* to the tractate, *Abodah Zorah*. They were completed immediately after the redaction of the Talmud, both in Babylon and in Palestine. Some of these tractates are miniature codes of special groups of laws and some are of an ethical nature (Vol. I, Sec. 151).

Higger began with an edition of *Mesiktot Zetrot* (Miniature Tractates) containing the earlier version of the two ethical tractates, *Derek Erez Rabba* and *Derek Erez Zutta* as well as two chapters of two other treatises of such nature. This was followed by editions of *Sheba Mesiktot Ktanot* (Seven Small Tractates), treatises of the character of codes; *Maseket Semohot* (Tractate of Laws of Mourning); *Maseket Kalah* (Tractate on a Bride), containing several versions of a tractate dealing with conduct in marital life and kindred matters; *Maseket Derek Erez* (Tractate on Manners), the larger versions of these tractates; and *Maseket Soferim*, a treatise dealing with the writing of Scrolls of the Torah and liturgical matters.

The texts of all these tractates in the ordinary printed editions is very defective and full of errors, and besides, the ethical tractates overlap each other and some parts of one treatise are included in another. Higger edited the tractates according to manuscripts as well as excerpts and quotations found in the Talmud and thus offers a much improved text. The editions are supplied with lengthy introductions and numerous notes. The introductions discuss the style, place of redaction, the relation of the content of each tractate to the Talmudic literature, and gives lists of the *Tannaim* and *Amoraim* mentioned in it, of the excerpts and quotations found in the Talmud and in the works of Mediaeval scholars, and similar matters. There is much erudition displayed by the editor, both in the introductions and notes, but of a somewhat dry nature. He evidently had in mind only the scholar who is interested primarily in a correct text but not the larger class of students. His notes contain mainly variant readings and references to parallel passages, but very few explanations of difficult passages. Nor did he trouble himself to discuss in his introductions the nature and character of the ethical teachings which the treatises of that type contain. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, Higger's editions are an important contribution to Talmudic studies.

iii. A work of merit in the field of Rabbinics is the edition and translation from Arabic into Hebrew of a part of the code of Hefez ben Yazliah, entitled *Sefer ha-Mizwot* (Book of Precepts) by Ben Zion Halper (d. 1924). That code is of exceptional importance, for it was the first of its kind in which the decisions are arranged according to the precepts and it exerted great influence upon later codifiers by its method and views (Vol. I, Sec. 153). The book of Hefez is quoted by many Mediaeval scholars including Maimonides. The multiplicity of references to this work and the numerous excerpts in various legal works prove that it was held in great esteem. The work itself, however, was lost, and as said, was known only by the references. Halper found a large part of it in a collection of *Genizah* manuscripts brought to Dropsie College from Egypt by the late Cyrus Adler and undertook to edit the Arabic text as well as to translate it into Hebrew.

He also added a long introduction which is a monograph on Hefez and his work. In the introduction he discusses the question of the enumeration of precepts, gives biographical data about Hefez proving conclusively that he lived in Babylonia, in the city of Mosul, describes the nature of the book, and compares it with the *Sefer ha-Mizwot* of

Maimonides. Halper's views on these matters elucidate an important phase in the history of codification. Of special merit is his fine Hebrew translation of the Arabic original, for he thus saved a large part of an important early code from oblivion.

iv. A comprehensive and useful introduction to the Talmud was written by M. Mielziner (d. 1903). It is divided into four parts. The first gives a survey of the development of Talmudic and Rabbinic literature from early times to the code of Karo, the *Shulhan Arukh*. It deals especially with the *Mishnah*, the *Tosefta*, Halakic Midrashim, the composition of the Talmud, the lives and activities of the principal *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*, and the important codes of post-Talmudic times. Succinct descriptions are given of each tractate of the *Mishnah* and of each of the other Halakic works and codes. A special chapter is also devoted to the description of the leading commentaries on the *Mishnah* and the Talmud, as well as of the important works on methodology. The second part deals with hermeneutics of the Talmud in which the rules of interpretation employed by the *Tannaim* in their derivation of the laws from Biblical verses and by the *Amoraim* in their expounding of the *Mishnah* and application of law to life are explained and elucidated by extensive illustrations. The third part discusses both the methodology and terminology of the Talmud. An exceedingly large number of terms which are used frequently in the *Gemarah* are defined and simplified for the benefit of the uninitiated student, so that he may find his way in the mazes of the complicated discussion.

The fourth part contains the outlines of Talmudic ethics in which the principal concepts bearing mainly on conduct of man as an individual and in relation to society, are briefly stated. The introduction, due to its popular nature and logical method of treatment of the material, went through three editions, two in the life of the author (1894, 1902), and the third in 1924 which was edited by J. Bloch and L. Finkelstein. The editors added a number of notes of an historical and bibliographical nature.

v. A work of both extensive and intensive Talmudic erudition is the monograph, *The Redaction of the Talmud*, by J. Kaplan (d. 1939). In this work the author examines critically all the views of the preceding scholars concerning the redaction of the Talmud and finds them wanting. He rejects the prevailing theory which was accepted by all scholars with various modifications for centuries, that Rab

Ashi was the editor of the Talmud, and formulates one of his own.

The gist of his theory is as follows. Accepting the views of Z. Frankel and I. Halevy that there existed records of Amoraic opinions and discussions arranged either by subjects or otherwise previous to the redaction of the Talmud, he propounds his thesis that the terms *Talmud* and *Gemarah* denote two distinct parts of this large work known as the Talmud. The first, says he, consists of discussion, analysis, and discourses, while the second connotes primarily the brief decisive statements of the law. These statements were mostly summaries of long discussions, but often also formed the starting point of a discussion. Rab Ashi, whose activity was extensive and whose Academy was attended by a large number of scholars was, with the coöperation of his colleagues and disciples, instrumental in perfecting and arranging the various collections of statements by earlier *Amoraim*, known as *Gemarah*, and perfect their order since the *Gemarah* forms the backbone of the Talmud. The work of Rab Ashi was of exceptional importance, and hence the tradition that he was the redactor of the whole Talmud. The actual edition of this work, Kaplan ascribes to the *Saburaim* (Vol. I, Sec. 151), the scholars who followed the *Amoraim*. He substantiates his views by an exceedingly large number of citations which he interprets in a keen analytical manner. The work, though we may not accept all its conclusions, is of great value for every student of the Talmud, for it throws much light on the nature of the body of the Talmud, namely the dialectical discussions which form its bulk, the method of the editors in the arrangement of the material, the question of the writing down of the Oral Law and kindred matters.

vi. A monograph entitled the *Karaite Halakah* was written by B. Revel (1885-1940). In it the author endeavors to trace the *Halakah* of the Karaite sect to its source. His principal theses are, first, that Geiger's theory which posits a close relation between the *Halakah* of the Karaites and the Sadducees is untenable; second, that the *Halakah* of this sect has a strong resemblance to that of Philo of Alexandria. He proves his first point by showing that in all legal matters which were a subject of controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Karaites agree, with the exception of two cases, with the Pharasaic or Rabbanite view. He substantiates his second thesis by adducing numerous examples in which the legal views of the Karaites either agree completely with those of Philo or closely approach them. He

does not, however, explain satisfactorily how the works of Philo which were written in Greek and which were entirely neglected by the Jews ever reached the Karaites so that his views could become a factor in the moulding of their *Halakah*.

vii. The Rabbinic and traditional view of the calendar is ably defended in a short monograph on the subject entitled, *Poroshat ha-Mo'adin* (The Systems of Festivals), by J. Greenberg. The author, after discussing the various systems of time reckoning of the leading nations of antiquity proceeds to prove that the Jews always followed the lunar year, and not, as many scholars asserted, that it is a later introduction and that the solar year preceded it. He further insists that the traditional view that the calendar with all its regulations regarding intercalation ('Ibbur) and the fixation of the holidays was arranged by the Patriarch, Hillel, in the second half of the fourth century C.E. is the correct one. He substantiates his thesis by a number of arguments which display a mastery of the subject in both its aspects, the mathematical and the historical.

C. JEWISH LAW

Of the treatises, monographs, and essays dealing with Jewish law, the noted are: *The Law of Marriage and Divorce; Legal Maxims and Fundamental Laws of the Civil and Criminal Code of the Talmud* by M. Mielziner; *The Criminal Jurisprudence of the Ancient Hebrews* by S. Mendelssohn; *The Protection of the Weak in the Talmud* by Mordecai Katz; and *The Jewish Marriage Contract* by L. M. Epstein.

i. The first of Mielziner's treatises gives a comprehensive statement of all laws relating to marriage and its dissolution, dealing extensively with degrees of consanguinity which make marriages between persons so related prohibitive, intermarriage, conditions of the marriage contract, the marriage ceremony, marital life and its effect upon the legal status of the husband, wife, and children, and divorce and legal procedure.

In the discussion of all these subjects he notes the modification in a number of marriage and divorce laws introduced in modern times by the followers of the Reform tendency in Judaism to which he belonged. He reports these proposed changes accurately but it is evident that he was not pleased with some of these modifications which are too radical. His second work is merely an outline of the principal concepts underlying Talmudic jurisprudence with emphasis on their ethical character.

He also shows that this character is reflected in a large number of legal maxims which served as a guide in the application of the laws to life.

ii. Mendelssohn's work treats in detail of Jewish criminal law in both its aspects, namely the substantive and the adjective, or procedure. The author displays a mastery not only of Talmudic knowledge but also a fair acquaintance with the principles of general jurisprudence. The material is logically arranged, and the occasional comparisons between Jewish and legal views and those of Roman or English law enhance the value of the work.

iii. Mordecai Katz succeeded in including in his work a large number of legal data bearing on the protection of the weaker members of society. It deals with the Talmudic laws concerning slaves, both Jewish and non-Jewish, minors, women, debtors, tenants, and the poor. The material, in spite of its diversified and ramified nature is systematically arranged, and the treatment of the various subjects, though succinct, is comprehensive and detailed, and the laws regulating the status and the rights of each of the classes dealt with are clearly and precisely stated. The introduction, which emphasizes the ethical principles underlying the Talmudic laws concerning the weak and stresses the efforts made by the Rabbis for their protection even to the extent of changing the Biblical laws, imparts additional importance to the work.

iv. Epstein's treatise deals with the marriage contract or *Ketubah* in its historical and legal aspects in a detailed manner. Both aspects are treated in a highly scholarly manner delving deep into the first sources and attempting to interpret them in a scientific manner. His method is critical and often too critical, and some of his theories are too daring. Thus, while we may accept with modification his theory that in early times the *Ketubah* was not merely a memorandum of the guarantees of the rights of the wife promised by the husband, but the document which legalized the marriage, we cannot agree with another theory of his regarding the form of the early marriage ceremony. Epstein interprets the statement of the first Mishnah in the tractate *Kidushin* which reads: "A woman is acquired by three ways, by money, by a writ, and by intercourse" to mean that all three are necessary for the legitimacy of a marriage, and not as the Talmud understands it to mean by either of these means. This statement he asserts embodies an older tradition recording the practice in early times. When we note that Rabbi Hiyya, a colleague of Judah, the redactor of the Mishnah, who collaborated with him in his work, is the author of the Talmudic

interpretation, we can hardly endorse Epstein's view. We would have to assume that Hiyya and possibly even Judah himself did not understand the older statements incorporated in the Mishnah. In general, the author relies too much upon extra-Talmudical sources and a single statement in an Apocryphal book, in this case, that of Tobit is sufficient ground for him to construct a whole theory. He overlooks the fact that this book is primarily a narrative, and as such, its statements do not possess legal accuracy.

Of great value are the chapters dealing with the legal clauses of the *Ketubah* which form the bulk of the book. In these, a comprehensive statement is given of all the laws and provisions which the clauses contain, as well as a fine historical analysis of the development they have undergone through the ages. Attention is also given to the social and economic conditions which caused changes in the laws relating to the rights of the wife, of the husband, and of the children. The work as a whole is a distinct contribution to a phase of Jewish law and to the study of the important institution of marriage.

v. Of other works and essays on phases of Jewish law there are to be mentioned W. Amram's *The Jewish Law of Divorce*; H. Leventhal's *The Jewish Law of Agency*; M. Jung's *The Jewish Law of Theft*; I. Lebediger's *The Minor in Jewish Law*; and M. Waxman's *Civil and Criminal Procedure in Jewish Courts*.

156. HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MONOGRAPHS

i. Many studies were made by American Jewish scholars in the field of history in its several phases, but as a rule, they are limited to shorter periods, or single countries, or specific historical problems. There was, however, one attempt made to present a view of the entire Jewish history in the most compact manner possible, and that is the one volume *History of the Jewish People* by Max Margolis and Alexander Marx (1877). This book, though intended to present a popular survey of the history of the Jews to a large circle of readers, is yet a notable scholarly achievement. To present the entire diversified three millennial story of the life of a people like the Jews without omitting a phase or an important event in a seven hundred page volume is no mean task. The writers had to grapple with numerous obstacles and to their credit it may be said that they succeeded in overcoming most of them.

In the method of arrangement of the material they followed the

scheme of Dubnow (Sec. 102), that is a division of history according to the important Jewish centers of population through the ages. Thus, Book I is devoted to Palestine from early times to 425 C.E.; Book II to the Babylonian center up to the year 1038, while Books III and IV cover the history of the Jews in various West- and East-European centers. The fifth book deals with the modern period. This, however, is the main division, but they employ also other divisions, and a number of chapters in the different books are devoted to special important episodes or movements, or outstanding personalities. Thus, there are chapters devoted to Saadia, Maimonides, Rashi and his school, Spinoza, Sabbatai Zevi and others. In this the influence of Graetz is quite evident.

The chief merit of the book is its completeness. The writers paid considerable attention to the results of historical investigation during the last half century and incorporated all the data recently brought to light. Not less valuable is the genuine Jewish spirit with which the work is imbued. This is especially evident in the treatment of the Biblical period. Great effort was made by the writers to harmonize the scientific and critical views with those of tradition, and on the whole, they were successful. The miracles are rationalized but not denied, the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is granted, but its gradual composition and division into earlier and later codes is recognized. In general, the treatment of the history of the Biblical period excels that of the later times. In the narrative of subsequent periods, we meet frequently with undue brevity as evidenced by the omission of any reference in the chapter devoted to the early epoch of the Second Commonwealth to the *Soferim* and their influence on the development of the Oral Law. The few lines devoted to the Great Synagogue hardly do justice to this subject.

Such shortcomings, however, are almost inevitably due to a work of this type. The same cannot be said about the treatment of the history of American Jewry. The writers scattered the data relating to this subject in various chapters in the fifth book, and as a result, the reader lacks a fair picture of the development of Jewish life in this country. In addition, the data are altogether too scanty. The arrival of the Russian Jews to these shores and their subsequent adjustment to conditions are referred to in less than a few dozen lines distributed in various places. It would have been proper that a history written in this country should contain several consecutive chapters devoted to

American Jewry. On the whole, though, the excellencies of the work overbalance its shortcomings.

Marx, however, contributed more to the field of historical studies than his share in the one-volume history. There is hardly a phase in the domain of history and the kindred fields of literature and bibliography with which he has not dealt in his numerous articles and essays published in various periodicals and learned publications. If these were collected, they would have made many volumes, and it is to be regretted that such is not the case. He also edited two important texts, a historical and a Rabbinic. The first is his edition of a part of the earliest post-Biblical historical work, the *Seder Olam* (Vol. I, Sec. 74) ascribed to the *Tanna*, José ben Halafta, a disciple of Rabbi Akiba. Marx consulted seven manuscripts in preparation of his text, and it is thus greatly improved. He also gave a German translation which contains many elucidating notes, and prefixed an introduction in which he discusses the nature and character of the work. The second is the *Kelalé ha-Talmud* by Bezalel Askenazi (d. 1530) which he published from a unique manuscript. It is a work dealing with Talmudic methodology and is of great value, for it states an exceedingly large number of rules covering every phase of the Talmud and greatly elucidates its intricate ways. In his comprehensive introduction, the editor characterizes the works of Bezalel in general and the methodological treatise in particular.

ii. A contribution of singular importance to Jewish history was made by Jacob Mann (d. 1940) in his two voluminous works, *The Jews in Egypt and Palestine under the Fatimid Caliphs* and *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature*. Mann devoted himself to the integration of the scattered data contained in the large mass of documents from the *Genizah* into more or less consecutive accounts of the life of certain Oriental Jewries in the three centuries from the ninth to the twelfth. The first work in two volumes deals, as the title states, with the two Jewries of Palestine and Egypt from the year 969 when the general of Al-Mo'izz, the Fatimid Caliph of North Africa, conquered Egypt and Palestine. The first volume gives the results, while the second contains the texts of the documents from which the data are deduced. The nature of the documents which are in many cases fragmentary and defective, and, with few exceptions, bear little relation to one another, made it impossible for the historian to present a real consecutive and complete history, yet he succeeded in drawing a fair pic-

ture of the life of the two Jewries during the several centuries included in his scope, especially of the intellectual and communal life. The economic and political phases are, however, not neglected by the writer. The dark period in the history of these important Jewries is greatly elucidated by the work of Mann. We learn that of the two Jewries, that of Egypt was the more populous, more prosperous, and politically more powerful, and consequently, the Palestinian Jews were dependent upon their brethren in the land of the Nile for financial and political support.

On the other hand, we are told of the great intellectual and moral influence Palestine, especially the Academy at Jerusalem and its heads, the *Geonim*, exerted not only upon Egyptian Jewry but also upon more distant communities in Byzantium and North Africa. The author deals extensively with the development of Palestinian intellectual life and succeeded in drawing up almost a continuous list of Palestinian Geonim from about 850 to 1116 C.E. of whose existence we hardly knew until the discovery of the *Genizah*. He also presents us with a fair picture of the order and organization of the Palestinian Academy at Jerusalem, and we learn that it consisted of seventy scholars who made up the *Sanhedrin* presided over by the Gaon. The first seven scholars were numbered; the Gaon was the first, the Ab-Bet Din (the Dean) was the second, and the rest were designated by numbers. It was considered an exceptional honor to be among the first seven, and the scholars usually affixed their number after their names as a title. Thus we find scholars signing themselves "the third," "the fourth," etc. An ordained student was given the title, *Haber*, a member of the *Sanhedrin*. As a rule, these *Haberim* became spiritual leaders in many communities in the Eastern Diaspora.

Of special interest is the chapter dealing with the communal organization, primarily of the Egyptian Jewry. There we learn that this Jewry had a well-ordered hierarchy of officials. The head of the entire Jewry whose influence extended also to Palestine and Syria was the *Nagid* who represented the Jews politically. Second to him was the *Rosh ha-Khillot* (Head of the Communities) who seemed to have charge of the inner life of the communities. Each community had its secular head called *Rosh ha-Kahal* and the *Haber*, the spiritual head; besides, there were the *Dayyanim* (Judges) and the *Hazzan*, who was not only the reader of the prayers but the preacher and frequently the composer of liturgical poetic pieces. In addition, there were a number

of other officials styled by various titles. Honorary degrees were often conferred by the Palestinian Gaon upon various important members of Diaspora communities, especially patrons of the Academy, chief of which were that of *Haber* or *Hakam ha-Yeshibah* (Scholar of the Academy), but there were numerous others. We also learn that in addition to all these officers there were, both in Palestine and in Egypt, *Nesim* (Patriarchs). These were persons of Davidic descent who laid claim to prestige and honor on that account, and frequently received it. Thus, the work elucidates the history of the Jews of the Orient during several centuries in its most important phases.

The second work in two bulky volumes contains a large number of studies or essays on historical and literary subjects and a still larger number of texts published from *Genizah* manuscripts as well as from those found in various libraries. The first volume deals primarily with numerous episodes in the history of Oriental Jewries, Babylon, Egypt, and Palestine, and the essays are based on material drawn from the *Genizah*. Several essays, though, touch on events in European Jewries. Of special interest are three documents relating to the activities of Hasdai Ibn Shaprut (Vol. I, Sec. 97), the Vizier of the famous Caliph of Spain, Abd-Ar-Rahman III. The first consists of fragments of two letters sent by him to the Byzantine Emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenetos (912-759) and the Empress Helena in which he intercedes on behalf of his brethren and asks that the rulers deal justly with them. It is to be noted that these letters addressed to the royal persons were written in Hebrew. Hasdai expected them to be translated. The second document is a letter from the Jews of Southern Italy asking Hasdai to use his good offices with the Byzantine Emperor to whom that part of Italy was then subjected to grant them a larger measure of tolerance. The third letter is a document from several communities in the Provence requesting his help in freeing them from a burdensome tax which consisted of contributing at Easter thirty pounds of wax for the Church. These documents prove the great influence of Hasdai, by virtue of his position at the Court of the Caliph, in the courts of Christian rulers. The other essays throw light upon the history of the above-mentioned Jewries from the ninth to the fifteenth century, but on account of their technical character cannot be summarized.

The second volume is devoted to the history and literature of the Karaites. Its material is drawn from manuscripts in different collections found in various libraries. It is probably the best treatise on the

history of this sect which has appeared since the epoch-making work of Simḥa Pinsker, *Likḳutē Kadmoniyot* (Vol. III, Sec. 88), which was published in 1860. Its range is wide for it covers a period of a thousand years, from the ninth to the nineteenth century. It contains numerous new data relating to the settlement of the Karaites in Jerusalem and their activities in Byzantium. But of special value are the long sections dealing with the Karaites in Crimea, Poland, and Lithuania. Here the large number of texts hitherto unknown elucidate almost every phase of the life of the Karaite communities in these countries—spiritual, intellectual, social, and economic. The volume which consists of over fifteen hundred pages is a veritable mine of historical and literary knowledge of Karaism and Karaites and is a contribution to Jewish history of the first magnitude.

iii. Another scholar who made notable contributions to Jewish history of the period of the Second Commonwealth is Solomon Zeitlin. He is a prolific writer and his essays on various phases of the history and literature of that period are numerous. Of his more important studies are the works, *Megillat Ta'anit* and *The History of the Second Jewish Commonwealth*.

The first is a scholarly study of the early historical chronicle, *The Scroll of Fasts* (Vol. I, Sec. 73), as a source for Jewish chronology and history in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. It deals with the chronology of events of the periods as given in the Books of the Maccabees and Josephus, with the fixing of the Jubilee years, and finally with the exact determination of the nature of the events referred to in the Scroll. He attempts to solve many difficulties and problems which these subjects present. Some of his solutions are very ingenious, as, for instance, his removal of the discrepancy of a year which exists in the dating of events between the First and the Second Book of Maccabees, both of which use the Seleucid era. He explains it by advancing the hypothesis that the author of the First Maccabees who was a Palestinian considered the first day of the month of Tishri of the year 312 B.C.E., when that era began, as the beginning of the second year, since that day is the Jewish New Year. The author of the second book who lived in the Hellenic Diaspora continued to count the first year of that era until the following spring. This theory explains many difficulties in the chronology of that period as given in the two books as well as in the data of Josephus. Skilful are also his identification of the events stated in the Scroll which was a subject of much controversy among

the scholars. Zeitlin often disregards the explanation of the scholium of the Scroll which dates from the Talmudic period and offers his own. Of these explanations by the writers some are plausible while others are far-fetched. As a whole, the work elucidates many episodes in the history of the period.

The second work does not justify its title, nor even its subtitle, *Prolegomena*, for it is neither a history of the period of the Second Commonwealth which lasted for 587 years, nor does it contain the prolegomena, or the theories or principles on the basis of which such a history should be written. It deals only with a small part of that history, primarily with the Hellenistic period, from 300 to about 140 B.C.E., and even that span of time is not treated consecutively. The book, however, possesses value, for the subjects dealt with, such as the relation of the Jews to the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, the Hellenist Party, the Temple of Onias, the origin of the Sadducees, Pharisees, and the Essenes, and kindred matters are of importance and are treated with historical insight, especially in their political phase. Attention is also paid to the economic factor but not in a sufficient degree. The various chapters are distinguished by a number of hypotheses which, though they cannot always be assented to, are yet interesting. Of these there is to be noted his view that the Temple of Onias in Egypt was built by Onias the Third and not by his son, Onias the Fourth, as it is usually assumed. He disregards the statement of II Maccabees (IV, 34) that Onias III was murdered at Antioch at the instigation of Menelaus and explains the statement as arising out of a desire of the author of the book to glorify Onias and not to lay at his door the accusation of building a Temple outside of Palestine. Such a supposition is untenable, for he did not have to murder him for the sake of his glorification, and besides, the book gives all the particulars of the murder, such as the name of the officer who committed the deed, his subsequent punishment by Antiochus, all of which cannot be pure invention. Doubtful is also his explanation of the name *Perushim* which, according to him, was the title bestowed upon the followers of Ezra by the priests of the family of Zaddok, the ancestors of the Sadducees. They, he says, indicated by this appellation that the followers of Ezra separated themselves from the standard form of Judaism. Such a theory can hardly be maintained in view of the fact that Ezra's reforms were approved by Nehemiah, the political head, and were also endorsed by a covenant of the people. Consequently, no priest or group of priests would dare to call his fol-

lowers separatists from the Jews or Judaism. There is in general a tendency on the part of our author who can be designated as a *Harif*,—keen-minded—in history to propound novel views with an undue certainty. On the other hand, there are a number of novel views advanced by the author which are plausible and deserve our serious attention.

Of his numerous essays there are to be mentioned *An Historical Study of the Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures* and *The Jews; Race, Nation, Or Religion*. In the first, in spite of its title, Zeitlin really adds little new about the dates of canonization of the various parts of the Scriptures, but on the other hand, pronounces a startling view concerning the rather curious criterion of the canonical status of a book mentioned in the Mishnah, namely that it defiles the hands by touch and disqualifies a priest from eating *Terumah*. The reason offered by the Talmud (Sabbath, 14a) is much more plausible. In the second essay the author devotes himself to the ascertaining of the attitude of the Palestinian Jews during the Second Commonwealth toward the Jews of the Diaspora, namely, to determine whether the former considered the latter members of the same race or nation, or merely as co-religionists. He displays much erudition in discussing the usage of the various terms, Judaeans, co-religionists, Hebrews and Israelites, in the entire literature of the Second Commonwealth, including that of the Hellenistic. But his sweeping conclusion that “in the opinion of Philo as well as that of the *Tannaim*, the Jews do not constitute a nation, that the unity is rooted in common cultural and religious interest” is not warranted by his own data.

It would take us far afield to discuss his arguments, but one example will illustrate his somewhat hasty method of proof. He says: “That the Jews of the Diaspora were called Hebrews can be proved by an early Mishnah (Gittin, IX, 5), where it is stated that on a writ of divorce one witness was a Hebrew, the other, a Hellene.” That Zeitlin misinterpreted the rather plain Mishnah can be seen from the context and from the proper explanations of both Rashi and Maimonides. The terms *Ibri* and *Yawani* refer to the scripts and not to the witnesses. Both the *Ibri* and the *Yawani* are Jews, but one signed in the Hebrew and the other in Greek script. As a whole, the works of Zeitlin display erudition and mastery of the subject but are frequently marred by the hasty conclusions.

iv. The history of the Jews of America received some attention from

Jewish scholars in this country and a number of works were written on this subject. Of these there are to be mentioned *The Hebrews in America* by Isaac Markens (1888); *The American Jew as Patriot Soldier and Citizen* by Simon Wolf; *The Jews of Philadelphia* by Henry S. Morais; *History of the Jews in America* by P. Wiernick; and *Jewish Pioneers in America* by Anita L. Lebeson. With the exception of Wiernick's work, the others are only partial histories, for even that of Morais treats only of the Jews of Philadelphia during the earlier period of American Jewish history. Wiernick's history in the second edition completes the account up to the year 1920, and it is comprehensive and detailed. Its character is that of a popular work which aims primarily to give information but it is distinguished by the correctness of its data and by the proper arrangement of its material. The history of the Jews during the Spanish-Portuguese, Dutch, and Colonial periods are covered briefly, while the bulk of the book is devoted to the later history and more than half of it to the years 1880-1920, for it is during this span of time that a real Jewish life developed in this country.

The point of view of the author is rather circumscribed, for he says in his preface: "The continuity of Jewish history is made possible only by the preservation of our identity as a religious community; local history really begins with the formation of a congregation." As a result, he devotes much space to the development of religious life in this country in its various phases while he neglects the economic aspects. He does not, however, overlook the intellectual, literary, and communal activities and devotes a number of chapters to these matters as well as to Zionism. As a whole, it is well written, replete with information and presents a fair picture of the ramified Jewish life in America.

v. A large number of essays and studies dealing primarily with Jewish history prior to 1880 on this continent in its different phases are contained in the twenty volumes of the publications of the American Jewish Historical Society. Of these, the notable are those of Max J. Kohler (d. 1935), Leon Hühner (1871), and George Alexander Kohut (d. 1934).

vi. A contribution to American Jewish history was also made by Anita L. Lebeson in her volume *Jewish Pioneers in America*. The work which covers the period from 1492-1840 is based largely on the rich material contained in the volumes of the Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society with notable additions from other sources.

She is quite successful in her task of combining the exceptionally large number of data of her sources into a well constructed delineation of a large part of American Jewish history. As a result we obtain much information about the activities of numerous outstanding personalities, their struggles in their adjustment to conditions in a new world, their participation in early American life, and their contribution to the development of many of its phases, both in the Colonial period and in the early days of the Republic. The nature of the early Jewish history and of the sources required that a large part of the volume should be devoted to the chronology of the lives and deeds of individuals who distinguished themselves as merchants, founders of settlements in the wilderness, or otherwise. We profit greatly by her description of the ramified business undertakings of such men as Aaron Lopez, Joseph Simon, David Franks, Barnard and Michael Gratz, and many others who were instrumental in developing American commerce on sea and land, and also in helping to settle parts of Ohio and Illinois. She does not overlook the social, religious, and cultural phases of Jewish life. A special chapter is devoted to the social and political aspects in which the life of the Jews at home, in society, in relation to their neighbors, their education, and their struggle for full political rights are fully portrayed. Excerpts from Dr. Ezra Stiles' Diary and from the minute book of the Congregation Shearit Israel throw much light on the religious life of American Jewry in the eighteenth century. Chapters are devoted to the settlement of the Jews in the Western territories, their participation in the Revolutionary War, and the attempt of Mordecai Emanuel Noah to establish a Jewish colony near Buffalo, New York, is told in detail.

It must be noted, though, that while much space is given to the earlier Jewish history, even to unimportant matters, the first four decades of the last century are treated rather briefly. A man like Isaac Leiser who made himself felt in American Jewry by his religious and literary activities is not even mentioned by name, nor are the early attempts at literary expression which took place during that time noted. Such omissions, though, impair but little the value of the book which is enhanced by its fine style.

157. *CULTURAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY*

i. A number of works dealing with phases of religious, cultural and social history of the Jews were written by scholars residing in the

United States. The most important of these is that of Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, in three volumes. The scope of the work is more limited than its title would indicate, for it is concerned more with the interpretations of social and religious forces than with the history of the development of the forces themselves. The point of view of the author, which he elaborates in his first chapter, is that the Jewish religion is an historical monotheism. By this he means that in Judaism time and human achievement play a more important role than place and static conditions of nature. It is this particular character of the Jewish religion which shaped the destiny of the Jewish people, for it enabled it to live without a territory and it emphasized more the factor of nationality than that of state. This detachment from, and struggle against, nature, however, says Baron, was not wholly beneficial, for it created many contradictions in the Jewish character. The Jew is both particularistic and universalistic, practical and idealistic, conservative and liberal. He further emphasizes the inseparable unity of Jews and Judaism and of nationality and religion in Jewish life.

From this point of view, he surveys Jewish history which he divides into four distinctive periods: that of ancient Israel ending with the sixth century B.C.E.; from Alexander to Mohammed; the Mediaeval period; and the Modern. The interrelation between the religious and the social forces in Jewish life in each of these periods is adequately discussed and illustrated by numerous data. The treatment of the Biblical, Talmudic, and Mediaeval periods is, on the whole, full and extensive. The same cannot be said of the discussion of the Modern Period. In its treatment, the author emphasizes more the forces which operated in the life of Western Jewries and neglected those which influenced the East-European centers. Thus, he devotes to the entire Haskalah period only four pages. There are also several other shortcomings, but, on the whole, the work is a distinct contribution to Jewish history. The value of the work is increased by the numerous notes and extensive bibliography which occupy the entire third volume.

ii. A sketch of the cultural and social factors which brought about the unification of the Jewish people from the death of Joshua to David is given by I. Zuckerbram in his *Yesodot ha-Aḥdut be-Yisrael* (The Principles of the Unification of Israel). The factors were, according to the author's opinion, the tradition of the Israelitish tribes of common descent, the gradual weakening of the native population, the establish-

ment of central places of worship, the rise of prophecy, the establishment of kingship, and finally the conquest by David of Jerusalem and making it the capital of the kingdom. Zuckerbram discusses the relation of the factors to each other and the part they played in the unification of the people. He emphasizes especially the influence of prophecy which by its teachings of an elevated conception of God, His omnipotence, and His election of Israel as His people, aroused in the Jews the belief in their power and the will for unification. The discussion elucidates a number of points in the early history of Israel.

iii. Two works written by American scholars deal with phases of the social, communal, and religious life of the Jews during the Mediaeval period. These are, *Jewish Self-Government in the Middle Ages* by Louis Finkelstein and *The Jewish Court in the Middle Ages* by David Shohet.

The first deals primarily with the various institutions and the numerous ordinances established and enacted at different times by synods of Rabbis for the regulation of Jewish life in many of its aspects. The work is limited in its scope to the period from the tenth to the end of the sixteenth century and to the Jewries of Western and Southern Europe, such as the Franco-German, Italian, Spanish, and those of the Greek Islands, Crete (Candia) and Corfu. Within these limits, the subject is treated comprehensively and in detail. The book is divided into two parts, the first containing a survey of the work of the numerous synods and a discussion of the large number of ordinances enacted by them, while the second gives the texts of these ordinances with an English translation and numerous explanatory notes. The work is a contribution to Jewish cultural history in the full sense of the word, inasmuch as the material gathered from a number of sources sheds much light on the inner Jewish life in numerous ways. The ordinances regulated Jewish family life, communal management, business transactions, the rights of the individual against the community, the authority of the Rabbis and judges, the relations of the Jews and non-Jews, and at times even of the dress and manner of entertainment of the individuals. They reflect the religious, moral, social, and cultural state of the Jewries. These ordinances represent a constant adjustment to new conditions, for in many cases they go against Talmudic law, such as the two ordinances of Rabbi Gershom, one against bigamy and the other against the right of a man to divorce his wife without her consent, both of which are allowed by the older law. Nor has an

ordinance of Rabbi Perez against wife-beating, which allows the wife in this case to separate from her husband and to receive alimony, any basis in Talmudic law. These are only a few illustrations of the adjustment of law to life. The large mass of regulations covering every department of life affords many more.

The work, especially its second part, displays much erudition in the gathering and editing of texts as well as in the illuminating notes. The author, of course, utilized the many works of his predecessors, such as those of Güdemann and Berliner (Vol. II, Sec. 87), as well as numerous texts published by earlier scholars, but he succeeded in giving a more complete picture of important aspects of the inner Jewish life of the period from the legal and social point of view. In addition, his English translation made these texts accessible to a large circle of readers and students.

The second work covers only in part the subject treated by Finkelstein and is primarily devoted to a survey of Jewish communal life and its leading institution, the court. It has thus two parts, an historical and juristic. The former deals with all phases of the Jewish community, especially in Germany, of its organization, the rights of the members, the power exercised by the community as a body over the individual, the methods it employed in enforcing its authority, and its philanthropic institutions. Several chapters are also devoted to the attitude of the Jewish community to and the relations with the non-Jewish world in which there is to be noted an apologetic ring.

The juristic part is devoted to the court in its several aspects, procedure, its authority, and jurisdiction. The material drawn from Rabbinic literature and largely from Responsa is well arranged; on the whole, the first part presents a detailed sketch of the Jewish community in the Mediaeval period. In this consists its main value for the subject of the Jewish court was adequately covered by various earlier studies.

iv. A contribution to the cultural and social history of the Jews of the Diaspora during the Second Commonwealth is Max Radin's work, *The Jews Among the Greeks and Romans*, for though it contains several chapters dealing with important events in the history of the Jews in Palestine, its value does not lie in that direction.

Of interest are primarily those chapters which deal with the Jews outside of Palestine, in the Hellenic and Roman Diaspora: In these chapters he succeeds in presenting a clear picture of the impressions made by the three nations upon one another. He discusses succinctly

but comprehensively the extent of Jewish proselytizing endeavors and also seeks to find the causes for their comparative success. These consisted in the decline of religious beliefs among the intellectual classes of the ancient world at the time, as well as in the favorable impression which the more exalted conception of God presented by Judaism made upon them. Other chapters are devoted to the opposition to the Jews on the part of various strata in the Graeco-Roman society in its several aspects, politico-religious, social, and philosophic. The first arose because the Jews refused to participate in the common sacra or worship which was the foundation of the state in the Hellenic world; the second was due to Jewish aloofness from social intercourse on account of observance of dietary laws; and the third because of the Jewish belief in the superiority of their religion and their refusal to participate in the life of pleasure of the Greeks. The sceptical philosophers and intellectuals resented the attitude of the Jews and frequently slandered them in their writings. All these types of opposition gave rise to a considerable anti-Jewish literature which later became the source for accusations against the Jews by Christian writers. He thus throws much light upon the origin of anti-Semitism. Of value are also the chapters on the history of the Jews in Rome in early times and on their legal and social position in the Roman Empire up to 70 C.E.

v. Joseph Jacobs (d. 1916) undertook in his work, *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*, to present an historical survey of the share of the Jewish people in European civilization and their contribution to its development and progress. The book forms only the first part of a larger work planned by the author which should have served as a refutation of the arguments of the higher anti-Semites of the type of Houston Stewart Chamberlain who minimize the ability of the Jews and declare them to be an inferior race. In the other part Jacobs had intended to describe the contribution of the numerous Jewish individuals to various fields of knowledge and to determine the value of the Jews in the modern cultural state. The plan, though, was not carried out and only Part I was completed.

In the introductory chapter, the author sketches in outline the various phases anti-Semitism assumed through history, from antiquity to the end of the nineteenth century. It is his belief that anti-Semitism has always been forced from above downwards as a part of an ecclesiastical or political policy, and consequently, even the newer type of race

distinction is only an artificial movement set up by persons who are interested in the stirring up of such hatred. In his optimism he hoped that a statement delineating the service to civilization performed by the Jews would in some way weaken the movement.

The survey itself begins with a chapter on the Bible in which he shows how integral a part the Bible is of the entire European civilization, and how great was its share in its progress and development. It set up spiritual ideals for humanity to strive to; it was the first to develop the notions of progress and peace totally unknown to other nations of antiquity; it was instrumental in the rise of political movements of a democratic nature; it stimulated art and literature—for Mediaeval art and drama were imbued with the spirit of the Scriptures—and finally, it stamped every language of Europe with its impress. All this goes to show how deeply the Bible has sunk into the folk soul of the European. Jacobs substantiates his assertions with numerous historical data and facts.

This chapter is followed by one on the Church and the Jews proving how great is the debt the Church in all its branches and manifestations owes to the synagogue, and that Jewish ideas and religious forms are still imbedded in the Church in spite of its numerous efforts to divest itself from Jewish influence. With great skill and a display of erudition he discusses in the subsequent chapters the role of the Jews as intellectual intermediaries, the influence of Jewish thought in the Middle Ages, their contribution to development of finance and commerce, and to the progress of liberalism. He emphasizes the fact that the very existence of the Jews amidst the nations as a people different in faith at a time when every slight heresy was considered a crime, laid the foundation for the emergence of the idea of tolerance in European life. Jacobs, of course, did not foresee the bitter struggle for existence which tolerance and democracy wage at present. In an excursus against Sombart's work, *Jews and Modern Capitalism*, he proves the untenability of the theories expounded which make the Jews the greatest factor in the development of capitalism and consequently are responsible for its ills. Jacobs also shows the maliciousness of the economist in attributing to Judaism itself a commercial character.

It is questionable whether this survey will ever change the views of the higher anti-Semites, but that it proves to the impartial reader the thesis of the author that "in the intricate warp and woof of civilization,

Jewish strands have at all times been the constituent parts of the pattern, and to attempt to remove and unravel them would destroy the whole design," of this there is no doubt.

Of the monographs on the history of movements in Jewry during the Modern Period there are to be mentioned *The Romance of Hassidism* by Jacob S. Minkin; *The Haskalah Movement in Russia* by Jacob Raisin; *Zionism* by Richard Gottheil (d. 1937); and *Reform Judaism* by David Philippon.

Hassidism, which attracted much attention in modern Jewish literature, was not passed over by American Jewish scholars and found its exponent in Jacob S. Minkin who, in his *Romance of Hassidism*, gave a complete account of the movement from its early days to the present.

vi. The very title of Minkin's work indicates the attitude of the author towards his subject. Influenced by the spirit of glorification of Hassidism evinced by a number of writers whose works were discussed by us above, he sees in it a movement of revival of intensive religiosity, the effects of which were beneficial to Judaism and Jewry, and it is from this point of view that the account is presented.

The method which the author follows in the treatment of the survey of the movement is the biographical, inasmuch as he concentrates upon the portrayal of the lives, activities, and views of the principal leaders of Hassidism from the *Besht* to Nahman of Brazlaw. It is these portrayals which constitute the bulk of the book.

Minkin, however, in order to make his account complete, added several introductory chapters and two more at the end of the book which can be considered an epilogue. In the introductory chapters, he traces the mystic strain in Judaism from early times to the eighteenth century with special emphasis upon the teachings of the Kabbala and particularly the Lurianic type. He also describes the conditions of the Ukrainian Jewry which gave rise to Hassidism.

The chapters of the epilogue are devoted to accounts of the opposition to the movement in early times, the literary opposition during the Haskalah period and its vindication by later writers; to a description of the life of a Hassid; and finally, to an analysis of the contributions of Hassidism. The leaders discussed in the work are the *Besht*, the *Maggid*, Dob Baer of Meseritz, Sheneor Zalman of Ladi, Levi Yizhak of Berdichew, and Nahman of Brazlaw. The description in each case is detailed and complete. Not only is the life and activities of each of the leaders discussed in full, but also the religious views or the philoso-

phies are summarized and presented in a clear manner. The point of view, of course, affects the portrayals to a large degree as attempts are made to throw a halo of romanticism around each of these leaders, and as a result, exaggerations are unavoidable. The same note of overestimation is evident also in the description of the contributions of Hassidism. It is very questionable, indeed, whether the author is right in asserting that through Hassidism "the sense of wonder and beauty was restored to the Jew." We may agree to "wonder" but certainly not to beauty. The early *Maskilim* who lived among the Hassidism and observed their daily activities tell a different story, and their account is by no means to be disparaged. To the credit of Minkin be it said that he is not altogether blind to the defects of Hassidism, but his enthusiasm prevails.

The value of the work is enhanced by the fact that thus far it is the only one in English which gives a complete and interesting account of Hassidism, and also by its brilliant style which is often tinged with a poetic strain.

vii. The second is a work replete with data and information on the history of the Jews in Russia and the various efforts made by the enlightened or the *Maskilim* to bring their brethren in close contact with European culture, but it does not give the history of a definite movement which found its chief expression in Hebrew literature. One of the greatest shortcomings is the disproportionate arrangement of the material. More than half of the book is devoted to the background of the Haskalah movement, in which no less than a sketch of the entire Russian Jewish history is given, beginning with the earliest times—the days of the Khazars. As a result, the Haskalah movement proper, its centers, epochs, tendencies, and above all, the leading writers of the period who exerted influence on life are treated inadequately. The leading poet of the Haskalah, J. L. Gordon, is merely referred to in several paragraphs scattered through the book; less than a dozen lines—not consecutive—are devoted to Abraham Lebensohn, while his son, Micah Joseph, the gifted singer, is not mentioned at all. The book, however, is not without value, for it contains a fair survey of Jewish life in Russia in its political, social, and economic aspects, and endeavors are made by the author to relate these aspects to the striving for enlightenment on the part of the *Maskilim*.

viii. Gottheil's *Zionism* is a comprehensive, though succinct, account of the Zionist movement from its beginnings in the second half of the

last century to the year 1912 in which it was published. There is hardly a phase or an important aspect left out. The background of the movement is sketched in the first chapter. In it the conditions which made Zionism possible, such as the rise of nationalism in the general world, on the one hand, and that of anti-Semitism, on the other hand, the various plans for the rehabilitation of the Jews on their land propounded by Christians, and the effect of the Eastern Jews who emigrated into Western lands upon their brethren of those countries are briefly but adequately discussed. In the following chapters, the *Hobebé Zion* movement, the colonization of Palestine, the theories of Smolenskin and Pinsker, the rise of Herzl and political Zionism, the opposition to the movement, and the post-Herzlian period are described and elucidated. Several chapters are devoted to Zionist theories, such as that of the Poalé Zion, the Mizrachi, and Aḥad ha-'Am's cultural Zionism. The book is written from a Zionist point of view, and though later superseded by Sokolow's voluminous *History of Zionism* (Sec. 106), it can still be read with profit.

ix. Philippson's work gives a complete account of the Reform movement in Judaism from its early beginnings to the present. The survey covers every aspect of Reform Judaism, its principal stages of development, both in European countries and in the United States, its effects upon Jewish life, and the views of its principal leaders. It is a history in the full sense of the word, not only because of its detailed narrative, but also because of its fair attitude towards the opponents of Reform. The writer, though an ardent follower of the movement, does not neglect to give the arguments of those who opposed the movement at its various stages in an extensive manner. Of special value are the numerous excerpts from the writers of the founders of Reform as well as from those of the opponents, from the proceedings of conferences and synods, and from other important documents. As a whole, the work greatly elucidates upon an important phase of the religious and social life of the Jewries of Western Europe during the modern period as well as that of this country.

158. HISTORY OF LITERATURE

i. A contribution of lasting importance to the history of Jewish literature, primarily that of the Mediaeval period, was made by Israel Davidson (1870-1939) in his numerous studies in this field. Of these, the leading works are: *Parody in Jewish Literature*; editions of the

poems of Jannai, of works of Saadia and Zabara; and his magnum opus, *Oẓar ha-Shirah we-ha-Piyyut* (Thesaurus of Mediaeval Hebrew Poetry), in four volumes.

The first is a comprehensive survey of an extensive branch of Jewish literature, written primarily in Hebrew and Yiddish, usually designated as parody. It is of a light, humorous, and satiric character, and its chief quality consists in the style which imitates that of grave, dignified, and often sacred writing (Vol. II, Sec. 57). It was only natural that in Jewish literature, containing many works of a sacred or semi-sacred character, which are known to large strata of the people, parody should abound, namely that the style of these works should be imitated by writers of a lighter turn of mind in order to make their humor or satire more effective. However, for one reason or another, earlier historians of literature neglected this field. Even the great Steinschneider (Vol. III, Sec. 79) discussed in his essay, *Purim und Parodie*, only seventy odd specimens of this type of literature. When we note that Davidson records five hundred of such works, we are able to appreciate the amount of labor invested by him in this book.

The book is divided into two parts, the first giving the history of this type of literature, and the second dealing with the bibliographical and literary data of the numerous parodies and their texts, many of which are reprinted wholly or partly. The first part is of exceptional interest, for we learn the manifold purposes for which the parody was employed. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was used by Zabara and Judah Ibn Shabbatai (Vol. II, Sec. 160) for satirizing physicians, women, misers, hasty marriages, and the writers imitated the Bible, the liturgy, and the marriage contract (Ketubah) for that purpose. In the fourteenth and the following centuries it was used primarily as a means of merry-making on the festival of Purim, and numerous writers parodied the Biblical books, treatises of the Talmud, the liturgy, the Passover Haggadah, and other religious writings. Later, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was employed for polemics against Christianity as well as for criticizing evils in Jewish life, such as gambling and imprudent marriages. In the nineteenth century, the heyday of the parody, the works reflect the variegated life of the times to a very large degree. The chapters dealing with the Modern Period are of special value. Davidson divides the parodies of that century into the following classes: (a) against Hassidism; (b) against Reform Judaism; (c) socialistic and revolutionary; (d) those that satirize man-

ners, customs, and conditions of Russian Jewry; and (e) those that deal with American Jewish life. Each of these classes contains large numbers of parodies which delineate Jewish life, movements, views, and manners of factions in Jewry in bold relief. The parodies against Reform Judaism satirize the insufficient knowledge of Judaism of some of the Rabbis of the period, their religious scepticism, and similar shortcomings. Those of socialistic and revolutionary character praise the socialistic ideal, or bewail the sad lot of the workingmen, or even display a strong anti-religious character. The writers of these satires imitate the liturgy of the Day of Atonement, the Haggadah, and even the Thirteen Articles of Creed by Maimonides. The American parodies reflect the disorganization of American Jewish life during the early period, the struggles of the immigrants, and above all, the materialism and greed which prevailed in life at the time. These satires, most of which were written in Yiddish imitated the Sayings of the Fathers, the Haggadah, and the Biblical Book of Koheleth. Of the Hebrew works of this type, the typical and the cleverest is *Maseket Amerika* (The Treatise of America) by G. Rosenzweig, written in imitation of a Talmudic tractate.

The second part displays great erudition in the fields of bibliography and literary history. The dates of composition and authorship of the works are determined with exactness, and the description of the early editions and manuscripts given in detail. Davidson not only discusses the parodies but also quotes long excerpts from a number of them, and these constitute a valuable feature of the work.

The editions comprise those of *Mahzor Yannai*; *Saadia's Polemic Against Hiwi Al-Balkhi*; and the *Sefer Sha'ashuim* (The Book of Delight) by Joseph Ibn Zabara (Vol. I, Sec. 202). The first is a collection of poems by the early *Paitan*, Yannai, which was discovered in the *Genizah*. Yannai, who was previously known only through several liturgical pieces, is by this edition revealed as a prolific poet who composed a cycle of *Piyyutim* for all the Sabbaths of the year, and furthermore, that he interwove in his poems Halakic and Agadic matters. The editor's notes establish a correct text and elucidate many a difficult passage.

The second work contains a large part of Saadia's polemic treatise against a book written between the years 850-875 by a Jew named Hiwi from the city of Balkh against the Bible, in which he pro-

pounded two hundred questions pointing out difficulties in the Bible. Saadia answered these questions in a Hebrew treatise. This was lost long ago and only a few references to it in literature were known. Many conjectures were made by scholars regarding the nature of Hiwi's questions and Saadia's treatise. The part edited by Davidson came from the *Genizah* and reveals to us the nature of Saadia's work and that of Hiwi's questions. The editor's notes explain certain passages, and in his introduction he adds a number of Hiwi's questions not found in the *Genizah* manuscript but referred to in works by other writers, and discusses the literary sources upon which the critic drew.

The third is a scientific edition of the well known humorous work of Zabara. The book was first printed in Constantinople in 1573, and only two copies of this edition are extant. Another edition based upon a manuscript was published in 1865 which differs from the first in many passages. Davidson's edition is based upon a comparison of the two and he selected the best readings. The valuable feature is the long introduction which is almost a book in itself. In it the life and contemporaries of Zabara are described, the content of the work and the sources of its tales, proverbs, and fables discussed and parables in Arabic and European literature quoted. The editor also added two shorter works of Zabara from manuscripts, one a poem on anatomy, and the other, in prose, on the color of the urine as a means of diagnosis of disease.

The Thesaurus represents a daring undertaking on the part of the author. He set for himself the task of recording almost every Hebrew poem which was written during a millennium and a half, from the fifth century to the present day, and of noting all data, such as the source where it is found, its authorship, its parts, and its form. The work includes sacred and secular poems with this difference that while sacred poems are brought up to our own days, the record of the secular poems ends with the Haskalah period or with the year 1740. If we take into consideration that close to sixty thousand poems, taken from two thousand sources, mostly printed books but partly also from manuscripts, we can gauge the extent of research which the author had to do in order to complete the Thesaurus. The method of arrangement is alphabetical, the first line of each poem is quoted and is followed by the data mentioned above. At times, when the question of authorship is doubtful or there are several versions of the poem, notes are appended

in which the subjects are briefly discussed. The work as a whole displays exceptional erudition and a complete mastery of the entire poetic literature of the Jews.

ii. Another worker in the field of Mediaeval Jewish poetry is S. Bernstein. He published in various periodicals many poems from manuscript with elucidating notes, but his main contribution to that field of literature is his editions of the *Diwan* of Leon de Modena (Vol. II, Sec. 155) and the *Diwan* of Emanuel Frances (Ibid., Sec. 35). Leon de Modena was a man of many parts and among his numerous accomplishments was also the poetic or rather versifying art. The *Diwan*, which he most likely collected and even copied himself, was lying in the Bodleian library for many years and was published by Bernstein for the first time. The poetic value of the *Diwan*, in spite of the editor's endeavors in his introduction to glorify Modena's poems is not great. It is rarely that the poet soars to any height. He is at his best in epigrams and epitaphs where his skill in play upon words and in parodying Biblical expressions and phrases is displayed to advantage. It possesses, though, literary and historical value, for his occasional poems, written in honor of Christian divines, of bridegrooms and brides, and of many communal events, shed much light on Modena's life as well as on the situation of the Jews in Italy during the seventeenth century. The notes of the editor are valuable; they elucidate the conditions under which the poems were written and also explain passages, though many a difficult passage remains obscure.

The publication of the *Diwan* of Emanuel Frances is a real contribution to Jewish poetry. This gifted Italian singer of the seventeenth century attracted the attention of literary historians and a number of his works were edited and published by H. Brody (Sec. 108). But many of his shorter poems remained in manuscript and the task of publication was undertaken by Bernstein. He based his edition on a manuscript in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, but compared it with another manuscript in the British Museum. To make the *Diwan* more complete the editor included eighty-six poems which were published previously. The collection includes poems on love, friendship, didactic and polemic poems, as well as epigrams and epitaphs. In a well written introduction, Bernstein discusses the life, contemporaries, and character of Frances' poetry.

iii. A series of essays on Hebrew poetry and poets in Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was contributed by A. G. Rhine to

the first volume of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, N.S. The essays give a clear picture of the intellectual and spiritual situation of Italian Jewry in that period and an appreciation of the character of the poetry produced at the time with special emphasis on the poems of Emanuel and Jacob Frances.

iv. Modern Hebrew literature is treated in two works, *Modern Hebrew Literature* by A. S. Waldstein and *Hebrew Reborn* by Shalom Spiegel. The first, notwithstanding its comprehensive title, is limited in its scope, for it is devoted primarily to belles-lettres, and, since this branch of literature developed primarily in the second Haskalah period, the author discusses only the works produced during the years 1850-1910. The preceding period of one hundred years he surveys briefly in the introduction. Waldstein fulfills the task which he undertook, namely to give an account of Hebrew fiction, poetry, and criticism during the span of time designated, in a fair and dexterous manner. His point of view is objective and he is quite successful in choosing for discussion the most vital phases of literary expression be they the works of writers of fiction, poets, or critics. His survey, though limited to outstanding men of letters, is yet comprehensive, for there is hardly a writer whose literary contribution is of importance whom Waldstein does not evaluate and characterize. The work, as a whole, presents a fair and critical survey of a large part of modern Hebrew literature.

Spiegel's work is extensive in scope and is distinguished by its method, point of view, and manner of presentation of the subject. The author set for himself the task to present to the general reader a vivid account of the renaissance of the Hebrew language during the entire modern period, from Moses Hayyim Luzzatto (Vol. III, Sec. 17) to the writers of our own days. Desiring to encompass the literary productivity of two centuries within the limits of several hundred pages, he confined himself to the representative figures of Hebrew letters and Jewish life, and chose the biographical method rather than the consecutive narrative. His work is, therefore, more a collection of essays than a history. He writes from the point of view of a Zionist and employs the national ideal as a criterion of evaluation.

The work possesses many excellent qualities. It displays mastery of the subject, insight into the social and cultural conditions which form the environment of literary productivity, and is distinguished above all by the vividness of description, spirit of enthusiasm, and flashes of poetic spirit. On the other hand, it is much circumscribed by its point

of view, subjective attitude, and by the desire to impress the reader by euphuistic titles, such as *A Messiah* (Luzzatto); *The Hunchbacked Philosopher* (Mendelssohn); *Saint and Satirist* (Levinsohn and J. L. Gordon), and similar ones.

It would take us far afield to follow the author in his various characterizations and point out some hasty judgments. We will, therefore, limit ourselves to a few of the shortcomings. The author is reluctant to grant Luzzatto the title, "the Father of the Modern Hebrew Literature," for the reason that his piety, mysticism, and Messianic aspirations make him rather a link in the long chain of traditional Jewish literature than one who opens the period of modern Hebrew literature. However, literary works should not be judged by the personality of their author, but on their intrinsic merit and extent of influence. Judged by these criteria, Luzzatto's dramas do form the first and one of the finest links in modern Hebrew literature. The chapter entitled, *A Hunchbacked Philosopher*, discusses the social and cultural conditions of German Jewry in the second half of the eighteenth century in a skillful manner, but states little about Mendelssohn himself. In *Saint and Satirist*, I. B. Levinsohn is referred to by the author as a saint, while the leading poet of the Haskalah, J. L. Gordon, is judged primarily by his satiric poems, and the verdict is unfavorable. Levinsohn was no saint and there was much more to Gordon's poetry than mere skill in satire. Similar shortcomings can be pointed out in many more of his views regarding the entire period of the Haskalah which are often one-sided, but these will suffice. His chapters on the literature of the nationalistic period are comparatively free from faults and are written with enthusiasm. On the whole, *Hebrew Reborn* is a vivid account of the revival of Hebrew as reflected in the literature of the Modern Period, especially in the activity of its leading creators.

v. An indefatigable worker in the field of Jewish literature, who devoted himself to compiling dictionaries of proverbs and maxims, literary anthologies, and editing a number of smaller Midrashim, itineraries, and polemic works, is J. D. Eisenstein (1854). His works comprise *Oẓar Mamoré Hazal* (A Dictionary of Talmudic Maxims and Proverbs); *Oẓar Mamoré Tanak* (A Dictionary of Proverbs of the Bible); *Oẓar Midrashim* (A Collection of Midrashim); *Oẓar Massa'ot* (A Collection of Itineraries); *Oẓar Vīkūhim* (A Collection of Polemic Works); *Oẓar Derashot* (An Anthology of Sermons); *Oẓar Dinim*

u-Minhagim (A Thesaurus of Laws and Customs); and *Oẓar Zikronotai* (Memoirs).

The first two, as their titles indicate, are dictionaries of proverbs and maxims culled from the entire Talmudic literature and the Bible respectively. The innovation introduced by Eisenstein consists in the arrangement of the material. All previous works of this kind followed the alphabetical arrangement of the single quotations, while his dictionaries follow the subject method.

Groups of quotations are arranged around a central theme or subject, and these subjects in turn are arranged alphabetically. The number of quotations in each of the dictionaries reaches into the thousands. Eisenstein exercised good judgment in the selection of both the subjects and the quotations.

The *Oẓar Midrashim* contains two hundred texts of smaller Agadic collections of various nature and character, among them many which deal with phases of early Jewish mysticism. Each Midrash is prefaced by an introduction which discusses its character, authorship, and date. The *Oẓar Massa'ot* and *Oẓar Vikuḥim* contain respectively the texts of the principal itineraries written by travelers from the early Mediaeval Ages to the nineteenth century, and of the apologetic and polemic works composed by leading representatives of Judaism. The *Oẓar Derashot* is an anthology of two hundred sermons culled from hundreds of homiletic works and arranged according to a double order, that of the festivals and other outstanding days of the Jewish calendar, and that of selected subjects. *The Thesaurus of Laws and Customs* systematizes the hundreds of laws and customs practiced in Judaism by arranging them according to the subjects on which they bear. Eisenstein, thus, on the one hand, threw open to a large circle of students numerous works of Jewish literature which were otherwise accessible only to scholars on account of their rarity, as many of the Midrashim and other works were printed only once, and he further elucidated their content by his introductions and notes. On the other hand, he furnished handbooks to Rabbis, students, and people interested in religious and theological subjects which are useful and instructive.

His *Oẓar Zikronotai* are of especial value for American Jewish history, as they contain records not only of episodes of his own life, but of all important events which took place in American Jewry during a period close to sixty years, from 1872, the year he arrived in this coun-

try, to 1926. And not only are events chronicled but short biographies and numerous data of the activities of outstanding personalities who influenced Jewish life are given. His method is chronological. Each year has its quota of records and biographical data. The *Memoirs* contain also lists of books and periodicals published in this country, works written by American scholars, and other data. It can thus serve as a source of material for the future historian of American Jewry.

vi. Another dictionary of proverbs and maxims was compiled by Meyer Waxman, entitled *Mishlé Yisrael* (The Proverbs of Israel). It contains over six thousand proverbs arranged according to subject method. It excels its predecessors, which were, as a rule, limited to Talmudic literature, by its wide range of selection, as the proverbs are drawn from the entire Hebrew literature, from the Bible to modern Hebrew works, and more than half the number of quotations are taken from Mediaeval literature. It also contains explanatory notes to most of the quotations which elucidate their meaning.

vii. The activity of compiling extended also to the field of Jewish folklore, especially to its humorous side. There are two collections of Jewish wit and humor, one by Jacob Richman, *Laughs from Jewish Lore* and *The Jew Laughs* by Felix Mendelson. Both works are arranged according to subjects and reflect the lighter attitude of the people to certain phases of life. Mendelson exercised especially good judgment in his selection of stories and anecdotes and also introduced some local color in them, inasmuch as a number of witty stories mirror the incongruities and foibles of American Jewish life.

A contribution to the field of folklore in the wider sense, namely, the elucidation of folk life during the Middle Ages was made by I. Rivkind in numerous essays in Hebrew and Yiddish. He discusses especially the forms of amusement prevalent among the Jews at the time, such as the kinds of games, including that of cards, and the various sports. Rivkind wrote also a number of essays on historical subjects.

159. BIOGRAPHY

Considerable attention was paid by American Jewish scholars to the biographies of outstanding personalities in Israel during the ages, and of the works and essays in this field the following, which aim to present a complete story of the life, character, and activities of the men chosen, are to be noted: *The Life and Works of Saadia Gaon* by Henry

Malter; *Akiba* by Louis Finkelstein; *Yehudah Aryé Modena* by N. S. Leibowitz; and *Maimonides* by S. Zeitlin.

i. The first is a biographical work of a high calibre, and is hardly equalled in the entire field as far as it is represented in Jewish literature. Malter did not undertake to write a mere record of Saadia's life and activities but a complete study of this many-sided Gaon in all the expressions of his personality, as a man, as a leader of Babylonian Jewry, and above all, as a man of letters in all the various branches he was interested in. He carried out his task admirably. Accordingly, the work is divided into three parts. The first is devoted to his life and activities as author and Gaon; the second evaluates his numerous works; and the third gives a detailed bibliography of all that Saadia had written and of the extensive Saadia literature through the ages.

In the first part, the author gives the most complete biography possible. He utilized all the new material on the life and works of the Gaon which were made available through the discovery of the *Genizah*, and in spite of the fact that the material consists largely of fragments and parts of letters and works, he succeeded in piecing together the scattered data contained therein into a systematic and consecutive account. It is true that he availed himself of the work done by his predecessors, A. Harkavy, S. Poznansky, L. Ginzberg, and others, but he also added much of his own, besides integrating the single isolated facts into one harmonious whole. The account of Saadia's life sheds much light upon his early literary activities which, as we know, began while he was still in Egypt, and especially upon his controversy with the Palestinian Gaon, Ben Meir, in regard to the fixation of the calendar. This controversy which formed an important event in Saadia's life and which was probably the immediate cause of his appointment to the Gaonate of Sura, was totally unknown to earlier biographers of the Gaon and to Jewish historians. It is only through the finds in the *Genizah* of letters and documents that it was revealed to us. The controversy created a miniature literature, and Malter not only summarizes its content but also adds numerous details and even devotes a number of pages to the explanation of certain principles of calendar fixation which formed the cause of contention between the Palestinian scholar and Saadia. In similar extensive manner does the author treat other important events in the Gaon's life, as his quarrel with the Exilarch, David ben Zakkai.

Of great value is the second part in which a complete account is given of all of Saadia's works under the following heads: (a) philology including not only his works on grammar and lexicography but also his Bible translation and exegesis; (b) liturgy embracing both his *Siddur* (The Order of Prayers) and pieces of sacred poetry; (c) works on the calendar; (d) chronology; (e) philosophy; and (f) polemical works. Malter describes the nature and character of the works extant and also of those lost as far as it can be learned from excerpts quoted by other authors and from references to them. He uses excellent judgment in the description as he deals with some works, which cannot be summarized, briefly, while he gives a fair outline of the contents of others. The eighty-six pages he devotes to Saadia's two philosophical works, *The Commentary on the Sefer Yezirah* and *The Emunot we-Deot* (Vol. I, Sec. 166) form a fine monograph on the philosophy of the Gaon. Of special merit is the chapter on *Saadia's Influence on Later Generations*, in which his influence on the development of various branches of learning in Jewry is traced through the ages.

The third part which occupies one hundred and twenty-five pages and, as said, deals with bibliography is an excellent specimen of a bibliographical work. Not only does it record every work or part of a book of Saadia, but even small fragments are noted, and their discovery and possible date of authorship described and discussed. Nor is any work, essay, or article written by scholars in various languages omitted. As a result, we have a complete history of a large Saadia literature which displays erudition and mastery of the subject in an unusual degree. Viewing the book as a whole, we can say that it presents the great Gaon in the fullest manner possible and is thus an outstanding contribution to both Jewish biography and history.

ii. The second is a daring undertaking, for in it the author attempts to delineate the complete biography of one of the most outstanding figures in Jewish history on the basis of numerous stray statements, maxims, controversial Halakic discussions, and Agadic dicta scattered through the extensive Talmudic and Midrashic literature. This task is made more difficult by the author who injects into the work his favorite socio-economic interpretation of Jewish history during the Second Commonwealth and the Tannaitic period. This theory endeavors to explain the rise of such parties as Hellenists, Pharisees, and Sadducees, and even the controversies between the various Tannaitic schools as results of the perpetual antagonism between the rich and the poor, or as

the author calls the factions by the name borrowed from Roman history, patrician and plebeian. It is against this background of factional strife that the life and activities of Akiba, whom the author makes a champion of plebeian views, is drawn.

On the whole, it can be said that Finkelstein succeeded to a very large degree in the greater part of his difficult task. Displaying a comprehensive knowledge of Talmudic literature he combined the numerous scattered data and references into an harmonious and glorious picture of the saint, scholar, and leader with great dexterity and skill. His difficulties begin when he insists on compressing the entire history of the period, political and intellectual, as well as the diversified life of Akiba within the frame of partisanship of a socio-economic origin. He displays great ingenuity in injecting in purely religious and dialectic discussions views and opinions based on class differences and variation in economic status, but his interpretations of Halakic controversies and hypotheses, though uttered with great certainty, are not convincing.

It is out of place here to analyze the author's theory in all its ramifications and appreciations. We will only confine ourselves to several remarks. Finkelstein carries this strife between patricians and plebeians back to the early days of the Second Commonwealth. Accordingly, Ezra was the head of the plebeian party, for all historians of a sociological trend of mind consider him the founder of the Pharisaic party, which is synonymous with the plebeian. The question thus arises, to what party did Nehemiah belong? As governor of Judaea he should have been a patrician, but in his participation in the activities of Ezra, he showed himself in full accord with the plebeian views. Again, Finkelstein considers Shammai a representative patrician and Hillel the founder of the plebeian school of learning. We know, however, from a Talmudic tradition that Shammai was engaged in the humble occupation of carpentry¹⁴ which would make him rather a member of the plebeian class. The remarks aim merely to point out how uncertain is the ground for the construction of a theory like that of our author. This able scholar may well remember the popular adage, *Lo ke-Kol ha-Goyyim Bet Yisrael* (Israel is not like other Nations),¹⁵ and similarly, his history cannot be interpreted by views borrowed from nations who lived under entirely different conditions.

iii. Leibowitz's biography of Leon de Modena was written with an

¹⁴ Cf. Sabbath, 31.

¹⁵ This adage is based on a statement in Ezekiel, XX, 33, 34.

aim to defend this learned and versatile Italian Rabbi against the harsh judgment pronounced on him by earlier Jewish scholars.¹⁶ It must, however, be admitted that the author did not succeed in his endeavors, for his defense is not convincing, and in fact, the numerous excerpts from Modena's works, which he quotes frequently, sustain the charges of inconstancy and hypocrisy brought against the scholar by Graetz and others. The biography is based primarily on data gathered from Modena's writings, and much space is devoted to a description of the nature of his works. The arrangement of the material, however, is not very systematic and no attempt is made to give a general picture of the colorful personality. The value of the work consists primarily in the extensive excerpts from the various treatises which enable the reader to gain a conception of their content.

iv. Zeitlin's *Maimonides* is a well written account of the life, activities, and the nature of the works of this great teacher in Israel. The book, though intended for the general public, covers every phase of this manifold personality with emphasis upon the principal works of Maimonides, as special chapters are devoted to the Code, to the *Guide*, to the commentary on the Mishnah, and even to his Epistle to Yemen. Of special merit is the chapter on the Code in which Zeitlin not only describes its character and general content but also quotes a number of decisions which illustrate the method pursued by the codifier, his views on the classes of laws, and his divergence from the opinions of his predecessors. It is, however, difficult to agree with the rather novel view of the author that Maimonides drafted the Code as a constitution of the Jewish state, the establishment of which he was expecting since he believed that the Messiah would shortly arrive. He bases his view on the *Epistle to Yemen*, in which Maimonides does comfort his unfortunate brethren by stating that their suffering may be only the promised prelude to the arrival of the redeemer, and even tells them of a traditional calculation of the time of redemption which he received from his father, which fixes the time of the "end" (Ketz) in the year 1216 C.E. However, one who reads the *Epistle* carefully can readily see that all these statements were made by the master only for the purpose of saving the Yemenite Jews from conversion and encourage them in their struggle for their faith, and he himself never took the calculations seriously. In fact, the text in this particular place is defective as was already noted by Lichtenberg in his edition of the collection of

¹⁶ On the character of Modena, see Vol. II, Sec. 155.

Maimonides' *Responsa*.¹⁷ Besides, Maimonides distinctly states in the same *Epistle* that the time of the arrival of the Messiah cannot be foretold with certainty. It is, therefore, very unlikely that this rationalist who pictures at the end of his Code the Messianic age in a manner stripped of all supernaturalism should have possessed such a strong belief in the speedy arrival of a Messiah who would wrest Palestine from the powerful grip of a Saladin by force of arms, that he was ready to spend ten years in the drafting of a constitution for the Jewish State about to be reëstablished. Maimonides states distinctly in his introduction to the Code that he composed it in order to supply those who have neither the time nor the desire to plod through the voluminous folios of the Talmud a comprehensive summary of the entire Oral Law. He further states in his letter to Joseph Ibn Aknin that he composed this work in order to supply the nation of Israel with an authoritative code which should contain definite decisions without controversies or differences of opinion.¹⁸ The purpose or rather the purposes of his work are then quite clear and there is no need to search for any other motive.

v. A biography or rather a biographical study of great importance and deep interest is Jacob de Haas' *The Life of Theodor Herzl*, in two volumes. It is not only the sole comprehensive work on the life of Herzl and his Zionist activities in English—there are several in German and one in Hebrew—but it possesses a distinct quality on account of the personal note and the long and close association of the author with the subject of his work. De Haas was one of the early followers of Herzl and became his "honorary secretary" in the summer of 1896 and was in close touch with him until his last day. The picture of Herzl's life and activities is drawn on a large scale for it records every move of the leader as well as his thoughts and reactions to the vicissitudes of the times. It is thus not only a biography but also a history of Zionism during the first seven years.

It is full of facts and data as well as long excerpts of Herzl's *Diaries*, personal letters, and other documents. Consequently, it cannot be summarized even partly—some of the stages and developments of early Zionism as reflected in the *Diaries* were given by us above.—Suffice it to say that a large part of the story possesses the quality of a first hand document, for the author, as stated, belonged to Herzl's intimate circle, and he consequently was informed of every plan and action of the

¹⁷ See his edition of the *Responsa*, Part II, p. 6. Note.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

leader. Besides, de Haas was also a leading journalist in England, well informed of the reactions of the leading English Jews as well as the press to the plans of Herzl.

Other qualities which impart value to the work are: his lengthy descriptions of the first six Zionist Congresses in which he participated actively; the miniature portraits of some of the other leaders of Zionism whom he met and worked with; the outline of the progress of the movement in this country, especially the various reactions to Herzl's *The Jewish State* in the last years of the nineteenth century; and the reproduction of the facsimiles of such documents as *The Call for First Zionist Congress*, of the program of that Congress, and many others. In view of all these qualities we can safely assert that de Haas' work occupies a distinguished place in the Zionist literature in English.

vi. Levinson's *Tubia ha-Rofe* delineates the life and activities of Tobias Cohen (Vol. II, Sec. 102), an outstanding Jewish physician during the seventeenth century and describes his views on medicine and evaluates them from the point of view of the present state of that science. The material is gathered from a number of sources, some of which were hitherto little known and is systematically arranged. The author, a physician of note, though he is primarily interested in medical knowledge and research, yet does not neglect to discuss Cohen's theological views to which he devotes a special chapter. The book is thus a valuable addition to the Hebrew biographical literature.

vii. To the works which deal with the cultural and social history as well as with the biography of leading personalities in Jewish life belong also the three volumes of collected essays bearing the title, *Studies in Judaism* by Solomon Schechter and *Students Scholars and Saints* by L. Ginzberg.

Schechter's essays deal with a wide range of subjects. They discuss theological matters, the social aspect of Jewish life as reflected in certain periods in history and in the life of certain communities, and the status of the woman in Jewry, chosen literary themes, and also with the life and activities of founders of movements in Israel and of a number of scholars of the Modern Period. To the first class belong his essays, *Dogmas in Judaism* and *The Doctrine of Retribution in Rabbinical Literature*. The second includes such essays as *Glimpses of the Social Life of the Jew in the Age of Jesus, the Son of Sirach; Safed in the Sixteenth Century*; and *Woman in Temple and Synagogue*. The third embraces a number of essays on the *Genizah*, on the manuscripts in the

British Museum, and kindred matters. To the last class belong the essays on the Besht, on Krochmal, Elijah Gaon, Naḥmanides, and the shorter characterizations of Abraham Geiger, Meir Friedman, and several other nineteenth century scholars.

The variety of the subjects makes a presentation of even a part of the contents impossible and we will, therefore only delineate a few of the distinguished qualities of these essays. The outstanding trait of the studies is the note of personal interest the writer takes in the subject he writes about. Schechter does not write like a scientific historian, or an analytic critic to whom the ascertaining of a datum, or the elucidation of a literary trait is of paramount importance. He is primarily the portrayer, and the presentation of a general picture of the man, or the period, or the community he writes about is the aim he pursues. Due to his personal interest in and the affinity with the subject he discusses, he succeeds in presenting the general picture, whether of the life of a man, or of a community, or a certain period by means of comparatively few traits or data. The traits or the data he selected are not always the most important or the essential; on the contrary, these frequently elude him, but with artistic and skilful manipulation they combine to form an harmonious picture. His essay on Elijah Gaon is a notable illustration of this quality; vividness is another quality of the essays. Schechter carried over in his essays many of the traits of his own character which was an amalgam of contraries and it is this combination of opposites which supplies vividness to his writings. Special skill in selecting excerpts pregnant with thought and pointed quotations is a third quality. These excerpts not only serve as proper illustrations of the thesis he expounds but enhance the vividness of the essays. A valuable feature of the essays is the introductions which form the background against which the subject is discussed and arouse the interest of the reader.

To Schechter belongs the credit of not only introducing to the English speaking public such men and subjects as Krochmal, Elijah Gaon, Ḥassidism, titles of Hebrew books, and ancient manuscripts, but to make palatable and present in a clear and attractive manner to the general reader such topics which up to his time were considered the province of the learned.

To the essays which possess permanent value belong *Naḥmanides*, *The Child in Jewish Literature*; *A Hoard of Hebrew Manuscripts*; and *Safed in the Sixteenth Century*. The last is of special merit as it pre-

sents a clear and impressive picture not only of life in an important community during a momentous period in Jewish history, but also offers excellent characterization of such men as Joseph Karo, Isaac Luria, and Moses Cordovero (Vol. II, Sec. 117) who exerted great influence on the development of Judaism.

In Students Scholars and Saints, Ginzberg, supposedly the dry scholar, the one who investigates minute data in the history and literature of the Gaonic period, or slight changes in the readings of Talmudic statements, appears to us in a new role, that of a brilliant essayist in the best sense of the term, both from the point of view of style and of content. The outstanding quality of this collection of essays is that it possesses harmony which is best defined as unity in variety. The essays, though apparently treating of such diversified subjects as, just to name a few, *The Jewish Primary School*, *The Gaon*, *Rabbi Elijah of Wilna*, and *Isaac Hirsch Weiss*, yet are grouped around a center of which they are the radii. The center is the author's point of view of Judaism. This point of view consists of two elements. The first is akin to the view commonly called positive historic Judaism espoused by Zechariah Frankel and to a larger degree by Schechter and others which briefly is as follows: Judaism is not to be judged by the origins of some of its principles or practices, or the manner of the rise of its important documents, but by the way it was expressed as a living religion in practice and thought by the Jews during their entire history. The second is that the most important expression of the Jewish spirit in its development through history consists in its intellectual attainments. Since the most original Jewish phase of intellectualism is the ramified *Halakah* in its manifold, it follows that the Jewish attitude towards the law, its study, and the lives of the bearers of this culture supply the best means for the understanding of Judaism. Hence the essays fall naturally into two or rather three groups. The four essays of Part I, *The Jewish Primary School*; *The Disciple of the Wise*; *The Rabbinical Student*; and *Jewish Thought as Reflected in the Halakah*, form a unit for they present the Jewish attitude towards learning and the learned, as reflected in primary education, in that of the higher institutions of learning, in the character of the scholar, and in the *Halakah* as a whole. The biographies of Elijah Gaon and Israel Salanter present the ideals and views of the Talmudic Judaism at its best as revealed in the lives of the two eminent personalities of East-European Jewry in the Modern Period. Those of Frankel, Weiss,

Schechter, and David Hoffman sketch the activities of the great men of the Modern Period who clothed the old ideals, views, and principles of Judaism in modern garb.

Another important quality of these essays is that Ginzberg, though greatly interested in emphasizing the Jewish attitude towards the *Halakah* and the contributions of the scholars to that field, does not neglect to recount in a very pointed manner the theological views of both the *Halakah* and its bearers as well as their practical application. Thus, he was the first to attempt to sketch the theology of the Gaon of Wilna and of Israel Salanter, and he is especially successful in his presentation of Frankel's views of Judaism. Very illuminating are his remarks on the importance of the *Halakah* as a source of Jewish history in the essay on Jewish thought and the *Halakah*. If we add to these the vividness of presentation, and the very apt illustrations drawn both from general literature and philosophy as well as from Jewish literature of which he is master we can readily say that the task the author set for himself, "namely to give to the reader some insight into the cultural life of the Jew by making him acquainted with the bearers of that culture," was carried out by him to its fullest extent.

160. RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL THOUGHT

The spiritual and intellectual fermentation which took place in American Jewry during the last half century as a result of the adjustment of Jewish life to new conditions brought forth a number of reflections and expression of views on the nature of Judaism, its character, essence, and relation to nationalism. However, the essays and works embodying such reflections are primarily limited to representatives of that new party in Jewry known as the Conservative. The reason for such limitation is not far to seek. The representatives of the views and theories of the other two expressions of Judaism, Orthodoxy and Reform, hardly needed any additions or recasting. The views of Orthodoxy were promulgated long ago by a host of thinkers and scholars, and if any change in such views were needed in view of conditions, the representatives of that party were either unwilling or unable to promulgate it. The representatives of the Reform movement in this country, had likewise little need to expound its principles for its champions in Germany gave sufficient expression to its views and theories. Their task consisted mainly in restating the principles of Reform in English and to defend them against attack.

The burden then fell upon the leaders of the Conservative movement to explain their comparatively new attitude towards the main tenets of Judaism and justify some of the changes which they explicitly or implicitly advocated. I say comparatively advisedly, for in reality, the origin of Conservatism, like Reform, dates back to the great upheaval in the life of West-European Jewry and particularly in Germany at the end of the first half of the last century, and the spiritual father was, as was pointed out by us above (Vol. III, Sec. 67), Z. Frankel. The development of this movement and the organization of its followers into an active party, though, took place in this country. The expansion of the movement necessitates, of course, a fuller statement of its views, principles, and rules of practical conduct, and accordingly, we have a number of essays on the subject and even a textbook on religion¹⁹ written from the point of view of Conservatism.

However, these literary expressions do not present a clear and systematic statement of the type of religious thought evolved by Conservative Judaism. There was much hesitation in drawing the logical conclusion from the supposed basic principles, on the part of the leading propounders, which resulted in a variance of interpretation of these principles by the younger followers of the movement.

Judging the religious view of the Conservative party by the utterances and statements in the essays of its leading representative, Solomon Schechter, we can say that it is characterized more by its differentiations from the views of Orthodoxy and Reform than by its positive assertions. It differs from Reform by regarding Jewish law and custom an essential framework of Judaism, the observance of which it considers obligatory and necessary, and it looks upon the Jewish religion as an integral whole composed of the inseparable Biblical, Talmudic, and post-Talmudic phases.

It differs from Orthodoxy in two essential points. The first is the admission that the laws and customs are subject to modifications and changes—the nature of these changes was never defined—and that environment and conditions of the time are factors in producing these changes. The second consists in exalting tradition and history to the place held in Judaism for ages by divine authority. The Conservatives, unlike the Orthodox, were not impervious to the attacks of scientific criticism upon the Bible, and in order to meet the situation the founders of the historical school, the real progenitors of the movement, accord-

¹⁹ *The Jewish Religion* by Julius Greenstone.

ing to Schechter, "actually removed the center of authority from the Bible and placed it in some living body which is in touch with the ideal aspirations and the religious needs of the age."²⁰ He further continues to say that "this living body is not represented by any section of the nation, but by the collective conscience of Catholic Israel as embodied in the universal synagogue."²¹ Schechter appears to hesitate to subscribe to this theory which he presents in the name of the historical school, but the enthusiasm with which he describes that synagogue, the frequent use he makes in many essays of the term, "Catholic Israel," which ultimately became the slogan of the Conservative party and numerous other utterances tell us otherwise. We have also seen above (Sec. 159), that Ginzberg's view, though expressed laconically, is closely akin to Schechter's and we can consequently assume that it is one of the leading principles of Conservative Judaism.

These theoretical departures from Orthodoxy had far reaching consequences, for since neither the conditions of the time justifying changes in law and custom were ever specified, nor the term, "Catholic Israel" defined, nor the custodian of the Collective Conscience designated, the principles and the terms were open to different interpretations in practice by various groups of followers of the movement. However, the practical applications of the theory do not concern us here. We may only point out one incongruity in its theory. According to its insistence upon tradition and the conscience of the nation, Conservative Judaism should subscribe to a number of dogmas which are an integral part of that tradition and conscience, yet these dogmas are either passed over in silence or are interpreted in a manner which does away with the real essence. Schechter, in his essay, the *Dogmas of Judaism*, says, "It was not my purpose to ventilate here the question whether Maimonides' Articles are sufficient for us, nor do I attempt to decide what system we ought to prefer for recitation in the synagogue." In other words, the question of dogmas is left open. And though he says, "My object in this sketch has been to rather make the reader think about Judaism by proving that it regulates not only our actions but also our thoughts," yet he only emphasizes the belief in God and the confidence that the God of Israel will be the God of the whole world as the two most prominent characteristics of Judaism."²² The bulk of

²⁰ Introduction to *Studies in Judaism*, Vol. I, p. xvii.

²¹ Ibid., p. xviii.

²² Ibid., pp. 151, 180.

the essay is only an historical account of attempts at fixation of dogmas by various thinkers. These two dogmas, however, are also emphasized by Reform Judaism.

Greenstone, the writer of the religious textbook, mentioned above, says of revelation that it is a "purely speculative matter," and proceeds to present an attenuated and quite modernized account of it. Again, in speaking of the dogmas of the Messiah and resurrection which he presents in a quite orthodox manner, he adds that these theories were some of the "fanciful pictures which the Jew's imagination created." These remarks are not made with any view for criticism or reflection upon the insincerity of the propounders of the doctrines, but to point out the difficulties inherent in the adjustment of the entire body of views and opinions of Judaism with an ideology which accepts partly the scientific and critical point of view, difficulties from which hardly any thinker can escape.

The place which the Jewish people occupies in the religious view of Conservative Judaism brought it in close contact with the national idea. It is true that at first its leaders were rather averse to its secular aspect. Z. Frankel restricted Jewish nationalism to the conscious feeling on the part of the Jews that they are a distinct people entertaining a hope for future restoration.²³ Schechter was also for a time cool towards Zionism, as he was apprehensive lest its secularism impair Jewish spirituality. However, seeing in it an important means for the unity of Israel, he ultimately endorsed the movement²⁴ but emphasized its religious aspect. As time went on, however, the followers of the movement in this country veered more and more towards nationalism and made it an important element in their reflections upon Judaism. It thus came about that a thinker who occupies an important place in the Conservative party in this country, driven by the force of logically consequential reasoning ultimately evolved a view of Judaism in which nationalism almost becomes its *raison d'être*.

161. MORDECAI M. KAPLAN

Mordecai Kaplan (1881) undertook in his work, *Judaism as a Civilization*, a difficult task, to reinterpret Judaism and bring it in harmony with modern liberal thought and also to point out a way of life to all those who are perplexed and disturbed by the conflict between the gen-

²³ See Vol. III, p. 383.

²⁴ *Zionism, A Statement, Seminary Addresses*, p. 12.

eral culture and their Judaism. His book created a great stir in the Jewish world at the time of its appearance on account of the novelty of the ideas expressed therein, and still more because of the radical solution he offers.

The bulk of the book makes it impossible to present its content seriatim, but we will attempt to present its main views briefly in logical concatenation, though not in the sequence they are given in the book. First, as to the point of view from which he discusses both the problem of the adjustment of Judaism to the conditions of the Modern World and the solution he offers. This point of view is, to describe it more or less adequately, an amalgamation of several elements: the scientific, the social, the critical, and the spiritual. It is scientific in its outlook upon the world and life in general which it considers subject to fixed laws of nature with hardly any interference of supernatural forces. It is social, inasmuch as it lays stress upon the social or the group life as the most important factor in the development of humanity, and as the source of many institutions of civilizations. It is critical in regard to history and historical documents; and it is spiritual, as it views the purpose of human life to consist in continual spiritual progress.

This point of view enables him to see the old problem of the adjustment of Judaism and the Jews to a new environment, and especially to the American milieu, in all its aspects. He sees its negative side very sharply and he gives a detailed analysis of the effects of the inroads the modern political and economic orders, as well as the modern ideology, made upon traditional Jewish life, views, and beliefs. As a follower of the modern ideology, he lays special stress upon its distinctive effects. He asserts that one of the strongest factors in the survival of the Jewish people was its other-worldly attitude during the larger part of its history, and when this is gone as a result of the effects of the factors stated, the question of further existence becomes ominous. On the other hand, as a follower of the social view of life and history, he sees also the factors which make for the continued survival of the Jew as a people, namely the compact Jewish masses in large cities, the momentum of long habits of life by the group, the various communal, educational, and philanthropic institutions, and other factors. As such he believes that not only can Judaism and Jewry in this country survive, but that their life can be made creative, provided a purposive program for their activities, based on a philosophy which takes account of all of their expressions, is formulated. This program which he designates as the cul-

tural version of Judaism he undertakes to delineate, preceding it with an analysis of the current versions of Judaism, such as Reform, Conservatism, and Orthodoxy. In order to understand both his analysis or criticism of the other views of Judaism and his own solution, we must point out several implications or corollaries of Kaplan's point of view. As one imbued with the scientific view of the world and life, it follows that he cannot accept the traditional conception of God, one who performs miracles and reveals Himself to man. As a follower of the critical view of history, he does not subscribe to the scheme of the divine origin of the Torah in the accepted sense of the term. As a champion of the social view of development of humanity, he believes in the division of humanity into nations, each of which possesses a distinct way of life or a culture, and furthermore, that the development of that culture, or as he calls it, a civilization, which consists of many elements is a result of an interaction of social and spiritual factors. It also goes without saying that each group or nation persists in the continuation of its existence, and that such persistence is beneficial for the progress of humanity. It follows from all this that Judaism is primarily a result of the ramified life of the Jewish people, and a way must be found by means of which that people, scattered as it is and subject to many influences, should continue not only to live as a distinct group but to perfect and develop its own culture.

Kaplan, though saturated with the spirit of modernity, yet prefers to cast his thoughts on Judaism into an ancient mould, or, to use a Talmudic phrase, to pour new wine into old bottles. Adopting a well known formula in Jewish lore which asserts that God, the Torah, and Israel are one, he employs these three concepts both as criteria of the validity of the other versions of Judaism and as cardinal elements in his own view. Applying the implications of his point of view to Reformed, Conservative, and Orthodox Judaism, he finds them all wanting. Reform Judaism not only minimizes the importance of the Torah, rejecting the greater part of its laws and denies the nationhood of Israel, but also its mission theory, which bases itself on the idea that the Jews were elected to spread the pure God-idea in the world, does not stand the critical test of history. Nor, says he, did the movement succeed in life; its adherents are not increasing, and its leaders are the children of orthodox Jews. Conservative Judaism is vacillating and has no principles, and as for Orthodoxy, its fundamental principles are at variance with the Modern World outlook. Besides, it minimizes the

element of Israel in the scheme of Judaism and regards the institutions of national life as of secondary value, and in addition, it makes many compromises even in regard to Torah.

In his own solution to the problem which he calls *Judaism as a Civilization*, the element of Israel takes precedence to the other two elements. He recognizes the value of religion in the survival of the Jews, but believes that it is only one element in the Jewish civilization and does not constitute its very essence, as the other versions of Judaism maintain. He really wants to preserve the existence of the Jewish group as a distinct entity which should possess a social life of its own and thus enable even the non-religious Jew to be loyal to his people and to Judaism. For this purpose, he stresses the necessity of preserving the social and cultural phases of Jewish life, namely the widening of the use of the Hebrew language, the perfection of communal organizations and institutions, the development of a Jewish type of art, and several other aspects of like character.

However, this aspect of his solution is not entirely new. It was to a very large degree proposed by Dubnow in his theory of "Diaspora Nationalism" (sec. 119). But Kaplan has much more to say. He learned not only from Dubnow but also from Aḥad ha-'Am, and to the views derived from these two he added some elements of his own. With Dubnow he agrees that the essence of nationalism consists not in race or state but in the uniqueness of the culture of the group. He therefore says: "The notion that allegiance to a state precludes identification with more than one nation will have to be scrapped."²⁵ He even makes the spread of that idea in the world, namely the reinterpretation of the concept of nationhood an important part of the Jewish mission. This mission, says he, will consist primarily in their serving as an example of the existence of a spiritual nation.²⁶

Kaplan, though, is not blind to the difficulties involved in such existence in exile and knows that the Jewish culture can never be developed there to a very large extent. He therefore agrees with Aḥad ha-'am that the rebuilding of a cultural center in Palestine is a *conditio sine qua non* for the survival of the Jewish nation.²⁷ Not only will Judaism thrive there "as a primary civilization," but the work of up-building Palestine undertaken by the Jews of the Diaspora will con-

²⁵ *Judaism As a Civilization*, p. 234.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 260 ff.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, ch. XX.

stitute an important factor in maintaining the distinctiveness of the Jewish group in the lands of dispersion. His solution is, therefore, subject to modifications according to the three zones in which Jewry will have to be divided. The first zone is Palestine where the Jewish civilization will approach completeness; the second are those lands where the Jews will be granted autonomous rights, and consequently, that civilization will have greater opportunity for expression; and the third includes such countries as the United States and similar ones in which the civilization will have to be more limited but still distinct, and developed in the above-mentioned manner—at present the second zone seems to be eliminated.—Thus far, we have dealt with the place Israel holds in our thinker's view, and we will now turn to the other two elements, God and Torah. Kaplan, despite his belief that Judaism a product of the life of the group during its long history, is fully aware of the significance of these two elements in Jewish life. In regard to God, though his conception of the God-idea differs greatly from that of the other versions of Judaism and is akin to the Spinozistic,²⁸ he says, "The Jewish civilization cannot survive without the God-idea as an integral part of it." He, however, adds that "there is no need of having any specific formulation of that idea authoritative for all Jews."²⁹ This addition, of course, aims to make this version of Judaism palatable to those Jews who are less liberal in their religious views. As for himself, he views religion from a pragmatic point of view. The Jewish religion in the past served the Jews as a means for a highly spiritual and moral culture. It has thus become an inseparable element of the Jewish civilization and must, of course, constitute an important factor in its future development. It must, however, be reinterpreted to meet modern views and be expanded to meet the needs of different individuals and groups, and also to include such spiritual activities which are commonly not subsumed under the ordinary connotation of religion as a faith.

In regard to Torah, namely the observance of the numerous precepts and laws, Kaplan is equally emphatic for its retention, though with important modifications. He views the body of these precepts and laws from the social point of view, that is, to a great extent, as folkways and mores with all the implications that such terms convey in sociology

²⁸ See his definition of God, p. 316.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 294.

and anthropology. However, he fully understands their importance, for it is these which made Jewish life distinct, and it is only through their retention that the Jews can have their own mode of life which is the crux of a civilization. He devotes a number of chapters to the realization of Torah in modern American life, discussing the family, the synagogue, the Sabbath, and the dietary laws as factors in maintaining the distinctness of the Jewish group. As a modern man, he sees the difficulties in the application of the Torah in daily life, and he makes numerous compromises and allows many infringements upon certain laws and precepts,⁸⁰ but insists upon fully intensifying and vitalizing others, especially those that have a social and spiritual value, such as worship in the synagogue and similar matters.

We have reached the end of our survey of the theories and views of Kaplan as embodied in his principal work. Space does not allow a critical analysis of these views. We may merely point out two flaws in their pragmatic aspect. First, that the difficulties in the adjustment of Judaism to a modern environment are much greater in the very aspects of Jewish life emphasized by Kaplan, namely the preservation of Hebrew and the creation of Jewish art, drama, and other cultural values, than in the purely religious phase, including even observance of precepts. In this case, our author may find more hindrances in the realization of his program than in intensifying the observance of religious *Mitzvot*. Second, this civilization as proposed by him does not tend towards Jewish unity; large sections of Jews do not share the principles on which it is based, and disagreement in matters theological creates, as is well known, strife and even hatred. It is, therefore, useless to speak of a proposed form of life for the Jews as a Jewish civilization when it can be subscribed to only by a small minority. True, the difficulties are not of Kaplan's making; they are inherent in the very strange situation of the Jews among the nations and in the impact of modern ideology upon the Jewish intellectuals, but they are difficulties nevertheless.

However, whatever the practical value of Kaplan's efforts may be, his endeavor to spiritualize American Jewish life, to inject in it social and ethical values, and to raise it to a higher level, is earnest and sincere. Furthermore, some of the aspects of his solution are workable and should be adopted even by followers of the other versions of Judaism.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 441.

162. THEOLOGICAL WORKS

Important contributions were made by American scholars to Jewish theology. Of the outstanding works in this field are S. Schechter's *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* and K. Kohler's (d. 1926) *Jewish Theology*.

i. The purpose of the first work is, as the title implies and as the author states explicitly in the preface, not to present a complete and systematic view of the entire Jewish theology but to give the authoritative opinion of the Rabbis on a number of important theological topics. This opinion, in the view of the author, forms "an integral part of religious consciousness of the bulk of the nation or "Catholic Israel."⁸¹ The method Schechter chose in presenting his material is the direct one, inasmuch as he lets the Rabbis speak for themselves instead of presenting their views as deductions from their statements. However, in spite of the method, the literary excellence of the work is not impaired, for the numerous quotations are integrated and united with the remarks of the author into an harmonious whole.

The sources from which Schechter drew his material cover a wide range, for he expanded the term Rabbinic to include even the authoritative post-Talmudic literature, such as the standard liturgy as embodied in the prayer-book, the leading ethical works, and even some of the sacred poetry. He sees in all these the expression of the views of the Synagogue, or the religious consciousness of the nation. The result is that while the bulk of the quotations are drawn from the Talmud and the Midrashim, both Halakic and Agadic, a considerable part are taken from the various branches of Jewish literature mentioned above. The author exercised great care in selecting such statements which are authoritative and disregarded those which are expressions of individuals.

The value of the work consists in the fact that the genuineness of the opinions dispels many erroneous views held by non-Jewish theologians regarding the fundamental principles of the Jewish religion. Thus, Schechter proves conclusively in his chapter, *God and the World*, how erroneous is the notion prevalent among Christian divines that the Rabbinic God is wholly transcendental and removed from man. On the contrary, the long array of quotations shows the closeness of God to man and His intimate relation to his fate and destiny.

⁸¹ Preface to *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. viii.

In two other chapters he demonstrates that the notion of God as the father of Israel and the election of Israel so frequently stressed in Rabbinic literature are by no means exclusive. God is the father of all humanity and all nations are His children. These views merely assert a certain preference for Israel, for he was the first to receive the Torah.

The three chapters on the Kingdom of God enunciate clearly the exaltedness of the Rabbinic conception of this fundamental principle of all leading religions in its three aspects. The first is the spiritual, namely the love of God and the thirst for Him on the part of the individual; the second is the universal, the hope that knowledge of God will spread to all humanity; and the third, though national in character and embodying the Messianic hope, yet was conceived by the Rabbis as a step in the realization of the Kingdom of God in this world.

Of special value are the chapters, *The Law as Personified in Literature; Torah in Its Aspect of Law*; and *The Joy of the Law*. These essays present an entirely different view of the Law as lived and practiced by the Jews from the one commonly accepted in the circles of Christian theologians. Illuminating are also the other chapters, *Sin as Rebellion*, *The Evil Yezer*, *Repentance*, as well as those which treat of several other doctrines. The value of the work is enhanced by the unity of its structure, for though some of the chapters were originally published as separate essays, they are integrated in the volume with great skill, as some of the leading doctrines are made to serve as foundations for the others.

ii. Kohler's *Jewish Theology* is of wider scope and content than the work of Schechter. In it the author endeavors to present a systematic and comprehensive statement of the fundamental beliefs and doctrines of Judaism. Consequently, hardly a doctrine of importance or even a leading religious institution is omitted including also the principal phases of Jewish ethics. The author, who was one of the leaders of Reform Judaism in this country, experienced great difficulty in carrying out his task, as he undertook to present traditional Jewish theology from the point of view of Reform which rejects many of the doctrines advocated by tradition or reinterprets them in a manner which evaporates their historical content. The book really represents two different aspects of the Jewish religion, namely the traditional view still professed by a majority of the Jewish people and that of radical Reform. It would have been better if the work were divided into two distinct parts, each devoted to the respective theologies. Kohler, however, chose a

different way, endeavoring to overcome the difficulty as best he could. He gives a fair statement of the traditional view of the doctrines, but immediately after that he either spiritualizes them to the point of evaporation or entirely rejects them in the name of the modern Jew, a method which gives the reader the impression that Kohler's interpretation or rejection is the final word of modernity.

The arrangement of the material is carried out by the author in an excellent manner. He divides the book into three parts, each dealing with a number of doctrines grouped around a fundamental concept as a center. These are: God, man, and Israel and the Kingdom of God. Under the first are subsumed all doctrines pertaining to God and His relation to the world, such as His nature, attributes, names, His holiness, mercy, justice, revelation and Torah, creation, providence, and ancillary matters. Under the second are grouped views on man's place in creation, his origin and destiny, his dual nature, man as child of God, prayer and sacrifice, the soul and its immortality, and several more kindred subjects. The third part deals with such doctrines which converge upon the life and destiny of the Jewish group, as the election of Israel, his mission, the Messianic hope, resurrection, relation of Judaism to its daughter religions, the synagogue and its institutions, ethics of Judaism, and the Kingdom of God. Much space is devoted to the doctrines, the election of Israel and its mission, the Messianic hope and resurrection. The last two are, of course, reinterpreted in the light of the Jewish mission which is a cardinal view in Reform Judaism. Space prevents us from summarizing this work even partly. In general we can say that the pronouncement of the doctrines is elucidating and that no violence is done to the presentation of the traditional views; they are given in an adequate and correct manner, except that an effort is made, as mentioned above, to invalidate their authority either by somewhat forced reinterpretation or by plain rejection. We merely want to point out one of the many difficulties which the writing of such a work, from the point of view stated, involves. This relates to Kohler's attitude towards Jewish nationalism. As a scholar endowed with a historical sense, he was forced to assert, "Religion and race form an inseparable whole in Judaism. The Jewish people stands in the same relation to Judaism as the body to the soul."⁸² In spite of that he makes a constant effort throughout the book to deny Jewish nationalism. Judging the work as a whole, we can safely regard it as an

⁸² *Jewish Theology*, p. 7.

important contribution to the systematization and history of Jewish theology.

iii. A work which elucidates a number of theological doctrines as reflected in an important Midrash is, *The Theology of the Seder Eliahu* by Max Kadushin. The author chose this particular Midrash for his subject of study on account of its content which was pointed out (Vol. I, Sec. 87), is of a religious-ethical character, and though there are differences of opinion about the date of its compilation there is no doubt that the bulk of the material it contains is old. Its theological views can, therefore, be considered as fairly representative of Rabbinic religious thought, though not in the measure our author takes it to be.

Kadushin, however, is not satisfied with a mere presentation of the theology of this work, but he develops a theory about the nature and character of Rabbinic religious thought in general, which he considers exemplified by the manner it is presented in the *Seder Eliahu*. This theory which he applies to a wide range of subjects he calls organic thinking. He claims that Rabbinic thought is not carried on in a logical manner, but is of a different type, namely that certain fundamental concepts forming a current of thought are in relation to the whole current as the individual organs are to the organism as a whole. There is always a mutual relation between them; the whole affects each concept, and they in turn affect the whole. In regard to Rabbinic theology, the four fundamental concepts are: God's loving kindness, His absolute justice, Torah, and Israel. These concepts, he asserts, are fundamental in the literal sense, namely, that all the other ideas, beliefs, and concepts of Rabbinic theology are built upon the four, and that one or more of those concepts always enter into their thought no matter what the subject is. The bulk of the book is devoted to the substantiation of the theory. In this work, the concept of God and His relation to the world in all its ramifications is taken up. The subjects discussed are the idea of God, His names, kingship, sanctification and profanation of the name, creation, God's loving kindness and His justice. Some of these subjects are generic and include ancillary topics. Loving kindness subsumes such topics as repentance, atonement, and prayer; justice includes the views on reward and punishment, problem of evil and justice in history. From all this it can be seen that the work covers an important part of Jewish theology. On the whole, Kadushin substantiates his thesis fairly well. His shortcomings are first, that he wants to compress a multitude of thoughts, views, and

opinions propounded through generations by numerous Rabbis in the narrow confines of a scheme of reasoning which he established in advance; second, that he takes the views embodied in the *Seder Eliahu* as authoritative for the entire Rabbinic theology without paying attention to the fact that certain expressions of phraseology are only peculiar to this book. At times, he even attaches meaning to passages of the book which they cannot possibly contain even if the phraseology may lend itself to such construction. Thus he asserts that the term, *Ruah ha-Kodesh* (The Holy Spirit) and *Shekinah* are used by the *Seder Eliahu* as terms for God. He is even inclined to attribute such use to Rabbis in general. Such assertion is groundless in face of the prevalent Rabbinic view of these expressions. *Ruah ha-Kodesh*, as is distinctly stated in an authoritative passage, means merely divine inspiration. It is considered there as one of the ten degrees of spirituality which a man can attain by his conduct, for it says that "Saintliness conduces to the resting of the Holy Spirit upon the pious."⁸⁸ Numerous other statements testify that the term is used only in the sense of divine inspiration. In face of all that, the statements of the *Seder Eliahu* cannot use it as a term for God and the phraseology must be properly understood.

The value of Kadushin's work consists not so much in the theory but in the presentation of the doctrines which is done in a clear and detailed manner. Of particular merit are the chapters on prayer and justice.

Kadushin later wrote another work entitled *Organic Thinking*, in which the theory is discussed in a philosophic manner and several chapters are devoted to the elucidation of the concept of Torah. But the date of its publication carries it beyond the scope of this work.

iv. A popular statement of the principal doctrines of the Jewish religion is given by Julius H. Greenstone in his book, *The Jewish Religion*. It is primarily a textbook written from the point of view of conservative Judaism, but the presentation of the content of the Jewish faith is given in a fairly traditional manner. The author, however, attempts to rationalize several of the beliefs and give them a modern interpretation.

v. Another statement of the doctrines and beliefs of Judaism written both from the historical and the modern points of view and intended to enlighten the adult layman is contained in *What We Jews Believe*,

⁸⁸ *Abodah Zorah*, p. 20 a.

by S. Cohon. The book is well written and is distinguished by a number of qualities. First there is to be noted its objectivity for, though the author is a representative of Reform Judaism, the doctrines and beliefs are given in their historical development, and no attempt is made to demonstrate the superiority of the Reform Version. The national character of Judaism is emphasized, and the mission of Israel is described as "the glorious ideal for the Jewish people themselves to so live as to make their spiritual and moral convictions universally esteemed and emulated." Valuable features of the work are the succinct but comprehensive treatment of the history of Judaism, the divisions in Present Day Judaism, and the meaning of Torah in its various phases. Attempts are made to rationalize such conceptions as immortality and God in human life and bring them in consonance with the modern liberal view, but nothing is said about Providence. The book as a whole is imbued with an intense Jewish spirit.

163. PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

American Jewish scholarship made notable contributions to the study of Mediaeval Jewish philosophy in its several aspects. Such are the works of Isaac Husik (d. 1939), M. Waxman, H. A. Wolfson, I. Efros, Z. Disendruck, S. Goldman, S. B. Freehof, and M. Melamed (d. 1937).

i. The first, besides his edition of Judah Messer Leon's (Vol. II, Sec. 75) commentary on the *Vetus Logica of Aristotle* and a number of essays on various philosophical subjects, wrote a *History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*. The history is a comprehensive statement of the development of Jewish philosophical thought through the larger part of the Mediaeval period from Isaac Israeli (Vol. I, Sec. 165) in the tenth to Joseph Albo (Vol. II, Sec. 81) in the fifteenth century. It includes the system of religious philosophy of both the Rabbanite and the Karaite thinkers. In the introductory chapter, the author surveys briefly the leading doctrines of Arabic philosophy and their reflection in Jewish speculation, the principal metaphysical theories of Aristotle, the basis of both currents of thought, and finally an outline of the main problems with which the Jewish thinkers of the period grappled. This introductory discussion is of great help to the reader in grasping the various systems of thought presented to him in the following chapters. The method pursued by Husik in presenting the views and doctrines of the individual philosophers is that of a middle way between the

summarizing of the contents of the various works and the topical or the problematic. He follows to a great extent the order of the philosophical discussions as they are presented in the works of the philosophers, but quite frequently he deviates from that order and presents them in a more logical and systematic arrangement, namely by delineating the more important problems first and then the less important. In general, he is more extensive in the presentation of the purely philosophical doctrines than of those of a theological nature. Similarly, he devotes the larger part of his work to the thought of the philosophers from Israeli to and including Maimonides, while the speculation of the post-Maimonidian thinkers, such as Gersonides, Crescas, Albo, and others, he treats rather briefly, a procedure which is not justified, for Gersonides and Crescas made important contributions to philosophy. However, the work as a whole is distinguished by the qualities of clarity, precision, and logical delineation of the main currents of speculative thought in Jewry during half a millennium and is of great value to the student of Jewish philosophy.

ii. The brevity of the treatment accorded by Husik to the post-Maimonidian Jewish philosophers was more than compensated by the studies of younger scholars devoted entirely to the speculation of several of these thinkers. Nina Adlerblum, in her monograph, *The Philosophy of Gersonides*, gives a succinct, but comprehensive and systematic presentation of the principal theories of this deep thinker. M. Waxman attempts in his work, *The Philosophy of Don Hadai Crescas*, to give an exposition of the views of Crescas on God, His existence, unity and other attributes; on God's relation to the world which includes a group of problems, such as His omniscience, will, creation, and Providence; on freedom of will and its compatibility with God's prescience; and on the guiding principles of ethics. These views are treated by the author in relation to Maimonides whose theories Crescas criticizes, and to Spinoza upon the formation of whose philosophy he exercised a probable influence. Much space is given in the work to the elucidation of the points of view, with emphasis upon Crescas' role as the first critic of Aristotle. Waxman wrote also several essays in English and Hebrew on Spinoza's relation to Jewish thought and on the philosophical views of Isaac Abravanel (Vol. II, Sec. 82) and Moses Mendelssohn.

iii. A contribution of very great importance to the history of Jewish philosophy are the studies of H. A. Wolfson embodied in his monu-

mental works, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* and *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, in two volumes. Wolfson approached his study of Crescas from a point of view different from that of his predecessors. He sees in this philosopher of the fourteenth century, an age when Jewish philosophic literature reached its quantitative zenith—for by that time almost all translations of the Arabic philosophic works as well as those of Aristotle were completed—"a true representative interpreter of the Arabic and Jewish philosophic tradition in its entirety." He was further intrigued by the keenness of his mind, the brevity of his language, and by his criticism of the Aristotelian doctrines. He believed that his rather slender treatise, *Or Adonai*, contains both a complete statement of that tradition as well as a criticism of its leading doctrines, and indirectly, as said, of those of Aristotle. He therefore undertook to expound Crescas' views in the light of the extensive Arabic and Hebrew philosophic literatures in a minute and detailed manner. The minuteness of his exposition is of such extent that his volume of seven hundred pages treats only of one sixth of Crescas' *Or Adonai*. It embraces only a study of the problems of infinity, space, vacuum, motion, and matter and form, contained in twenty-five chapters of Part I of the first book of the *Or Adonai*, and of twenty chapters of Part II. These problems form the basis of the traditional philosophic proof for the existence of God as presented by Maimonides and which Crescas criticizes. In the chapters of Part I there is the fullest exposition of the problems stated in cryptic language and in those of Part II the criticism is given.

The method of Wolfson in his exposition is that of Talmudic discussion, known as *Pilpul*, the very same applied by Crescas to his predecessors. This method aims not only to explain a text in the fullest manner, but also to go beyond that text and investigate the reasons which were in the author's mind for writing down every line in just such a manner and not otherwise. It attempts to unfold every shade of meaning contained in each term and expression. As a result we have a large volume expounding only twenty pages of Crescas' treatise.

However, he gives much more than an exposition. The volume, after the introductory chapter which discusses Crescas' knowledge of the philosophic literature and of his deep mastery of Aristotle derived entirely from Hebrew works, his method, and his influence, is divided into three parts. Part I is devoted to an historical and critical investigation of the main problems contained in *Aristotle's Physics* and the *De Caelo*, namely those mentioned above, in the light of the vicissitudes

they underwent in Arabic and Jewish philosophy. This investigation also contains a summary of Crescas' criticism of the Aristotelian views, and finally, the positive conclusions of this criticism which foreshadowed a new conception of the universe. Part II is an edition of the forty-five chapters of Crescas' text based on the first edition and eleven manuscripts and an English translation. Part III contains notes. The most important part are the notes; they not only occupy the larger part of the volume—close to four hundred pages—but they contain a wealth of information on numerous phases of Greek, Arabic, and Jewish philosophy. In them the source of Crescas' knowledge of philosophy are given in full; every detail is traced to its origin in Greek, Arabic, and Hebrew works, the views of Aristotle and the interpretations placed on them by his commentators expounded, Crescas' meaning of every proposition unfolded, and numerous parallels cited. In addition, the history of terms and concepts of Jewish philosophy is delineated in detail and light thrown on ancillary subjects. Some of the notes are short monographs on philosophic topics. The work as a whole impresses us by the display of a mastery of such an extensive literature in several languages, a large part of which is still in manuscript; and as such it can be considered as one of the best studies in the field of Jewish philosophy.

Wolfson's second work completes to a large degree the treatise on Crescas. He approached Spinoza in the same manner as he approached Crescas, from a wider point of view than that of the many scholars who dealt with the philosophy of this lonely thinker in their bulky volumes. He views him under two aspects, one which he aptly calls that of Benedictus, the first of the Moderns, and the other, that of Baruch, the last of the Mediaevals. In fact, several chapters of the book were actually published in the *Chronicon Spinozanum* under the title *Spinoza as the Last of the Mediaevals*. In other words, he believes that there is an explicit Spinoza who speaks in the *Ethics* in geometrical manner, in definitions, axioms, and propositions, and there is an implicit Spinoza "whose mind is crammed with traditional philosophic lore and whose thought turns along the beaten logical paths of Mediaeval reasoning." It is the relation of Baruch to Benedictus, the way one merged into the other which constitutes the main task of Wolfson. He assumes that the *Ethics*, the chief work of Spinoza, arose out of a criticism of the fundamental problems of philosophy as they were known to him through the media of the two philosophic literatures, the Hebrew and the Latin,

and therefore he proceeds to reconstruct the *Ethics* as it was thought out in Spinoza's mind before it was written down. It is his belief that the work as it lies before us, represents the thoughts of Spinoza "boiled down to a concentrated essence," for "the *Ethics* is not a communication to the world; it is Spinoza's communication to himself."⁸⁴ Hence the work appears quite often incoherent, the groups of propositions lack logical connection with each other, nor is there coherence between the propositions, for on account of their cryptic expression they appear even unintelligible.

Wolfson undertakes to remedy these deficiencies by reconstructing the original form of the *Ethics* with all its points of contact with the literary environment, and supplying the sources of the ideas, and the origin of the concepts discussed, as well as their metamorphoses through history. The method he follows is the same he employed in the first work, the Rabbinic form of investigation, for he says that the *Ethics*, which lurks behind the one written down, is an *Ethics* demonstrated in Rabbinical and scholastic order. He therefore applies to Spinoza the very same method which he himself employed. He proceeds to elicit the exact meaning of the words of the philosopher as fully as possible, and to understand how he came to say what he said and why he said it in the manner in which he happened to say it. He does this by tracing the origin of the concepts discussed in the *Ethics* to their sources in literature, dwelling to a great extent upon the works of Aristotle, Maimonides, and Descartes, who in his opinion, exerted a dominant influence upon Spinoza.⁸⁵ These are only the primary sources, but Wolfson does not overlook the numerous other sources and he draws copiously upon the entire Mediaeval philosophic literature in three languages, Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin for illustrations. He thus succeeds in reconstructing an *Ethics* which possesses unity, coherence, and logical sequence in all parts.

This reconstruction is not done in the form of texts and notes as in the first work, but in a consecutive manner as a unified presentation of Spinoza's philosophy and is thus accessible to a larger circle of students.

The nature of the work does not admit of presenting even a small part of the content. Suffice it to say that not only have we here for the first time a comprehensive account of Spinoza's view in a new light against a background of which the Jewish element forms the most

⁸⁴ *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, Vol. I, p. 23.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 19.

important part, but we also have an historical delineation of a large number of concepts, metaphysical, psychological, and ethical, written with skill and authority. The two works of Wolfson, though they apparently deal with two individual thinkers, form, by their scope and wealth of material, excellent source books for a deeper study of the history of Jewish philosophy in many of its aspects.

Maimonides, the old standby of every student of Jewish philosophy, was likewise not overlooked by American Jewish scholars. A whole group busied themselves with commenting upon his views and elucidating points in his philosophy.

iv. Israel Efros contributed a notable work to Maimonides literature. This is *Philosophical Terms in More Nebukim* in which the terms found in Ibn Tibbon's translation are alphabetically arranged and explained by means of the original Arabic expressions, or the equivalents in Harisi's version, or by comparisons with their use in other works of Maimonides. Some of the articles contain lengthy discussions on the various nuances which the terms assumed in philosophical literature from the time of Aristotle to that of Maimonides. A series of notes by L. Ginzberg appended to the volume, which greatly elucidate the history of the terms, especially with reference to the use made the larger part of them in Talmudic and Midrashic literatures, enhance the value of the work. The book conduces greatly to a better understanding of the *Guide* in its standard Hebrew translation.

Efros also wrote another philosophical work, *The Problem of Space in Jewish Mediaeval Philosophy*, in which he presents the various views of the leading Jewish thinkers on this fundamental philosophic concept with great skill and mastery of the subject.

v. Maimonides' knowledge of Arabic and his style were made a subject of study by Israel Friedlander (d. 1920) in his essays, *Der Sprachgebrauch des Maimonides* and *Der Stil des Maimonides*. He also published several studies on Maimonides in English.

vi. Z. Diesendruck (1890-1940), who distinguished himself as translator in Hebrew of the Platonic Dialogues, such as the *Symposium* and the *Republic*, also contributed several valuable studies on leading theories of Maimonides, the important of which are *Prophetie bei Maimonides* (Maimonides' Theory of Prophecy); *Teologie bei Maimonides* (Maimonides' Theory of Theology); and *Samuel and Moses Ibn Tibbon on Maimonides' Theory of Providence* and *The Date of*

Completion of the More Nebukim, all of which add to a better comprehension of the philosophy of Moses ben Maimon.

vii. An interesting study of the philosophy of Maimonides was made by Solomon Goldman in his book, *The Jew and the Universe*. The work, in spite of its general title, deals largely with the views of the leading Jewish philosopher which it expounds from a certain point of view. That point of view, developed in the first five chapters, is that the Jews, contrary to the Greeks, grasped existence, the world, and life intuitively and not by means of logical schemes and reasoning. And since intuition is inherently connected with personality, it follows that the conception of personality played an important role in Jewish thought, history, and religion. The author endeavors to prove that Judaism, in spite of its unlogical approach to the world and life, still managed to evolve a philosophy which carried more certainty and was of more practical value than the abstract philosophical schemes of the thinkers of other nations. It is this point of view which gave the title to the book, and from which he discusses the philosophy of Maimonides. In a number of chapters he points out the dualism of the thinker and the struggle reflected in his writings between his addiction to the Aristotelian philosophy based on logic and pure reason, and the influence of the intuitive view of his nation. It is this influence which, in the opinion of the author, often swayed Moses ben Maimon to forsake and even oppose the views of Aristotle and adopt others imbued with the spirit of Jewish tradition, and thus succeed in evolving a harmonious view of the world and life in which the postulates of reason and the teachings of the Torah are joined in harmony. Goldman substantiates his views by a large number of quotations and references covering a wide range of Jewish literature, philosophy, and scientific works.

viii. Personality, its value and influence on the cause of spiritual development of humanity, especially in the field of religion, is also the theme of S. B. Freehof in his book, *The Stormers of Heaven*. It is a collection of essays on great personalities in the fields of religion and philosophy in their relation to religion in a positive or negative way. Freehof holds that even those who rebel against religion drive it forward, inasmuch as they make its leaders take stock of its doctrines. The essays are arranged in groups, thus: five founders of Judaism (Moses, Isaiah, Hillel, Maimonides, Mendelssohn); the greatest five

Christians (Paul, Augustine, Hildebrand, St. Francis, Luther); five famous atheists (Comte, Bradlaugh, Nietzsche, Häckel, Russell); creative freethinkers (Socrates, Spinoza, Voltaire, Huxley, Ingersoll); royal builders of religion (Akhnaton, Asoka, Marcus Aurelius, Constantine); and religious geniuses of the world (Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus). The essays, though popular are scholarly and manage, in spite of their brevity, to emphasize several important traits in the characters of the great personalities. Especially distinguished in this regard are the five of the first group.

ix. To a separate class of philosophical studies belongs S. M. Melamed's (Sec. 41) *Psychologie des jüdischen Geistes*. It was rather bold and daring on the part of the author to undertake to delineate the characteristics of the spirit of a people scattered for the larger part of its long history through many lands and subject to the influences of many cultures. Melamed recognized that and says at the end of his introduction that he limits himself primarily to ancient Jewry. However, says he, since the modern Jews are the heirs of those Jews, the traits of that psychology are to a large degree also shared by them, and consequently, the findings apply also to their spirit. The boldness of the undertaking is enhanced by the point of view and by the spirit with which it is imbued. Melamed belonged to the group of intellectual rebels who made their appearance at the beginning of the century in Hebrew and German Jewish literature, and in the name of life demanded a change of values opposing the excessive spirituality of Judaism. It is in this spirit that his book was written. He endeavors to prove that the primacy which intellectuality holds, in his opinion, in Judaism and in the psychology of its spirit is opposed to the realities of life, and consequently impairs the further existence of the Jews as a national entity under modern conditions. He further asserts that religion was not the important factor in the survival of the Jews, as many believe, but sociological causes, of which the fact that they were always considered by their neighbors as a nation, was of prime importance. He also denies that religion was greatly instrumental in the rise of anti-Semitism. This was due entirely to the fact that the Jews existed as a landless nation. He demands, therefore, the secularization of Jewish life and the realization of political Zionism in its fullest extent. It is questionable whether Melamed actually proves these assertions, for he, as a rule, generalizes in his arguments. But that he expresses many views which are thought-provoking, of this there is no doubt.

164. *ENCYCLOPAEDIAS*

We cannot close our survey of the contribution of American Jewry to Jewish learning without mentioning the two Encyclopaedias produced in this country, *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* and the *Oẓar Yisrael*. The first is too well known and needs neither introduction nor description. Suffice it to say that thus far it has not been superseded by any similar work in any other language. The distinction of its editors, the great scholarship of its principal contributors, and the extensive manner in which important subjects were treated impart to it this special distinction. If we take into consideration that the articles on the Bible in its various phases occupy fifty-eight folio pages, those on the Talmud, thirty-seven, on the Midrash thirty-one, on Kabbala twenty-two, and each written by such experts as Blau (Bible), Bacher (Talmud), Theodor (Midrash), and Ginzberg (Cabala), we can safely assert that it represents an epitome of the entire Jewish scholarship of the nineteenth century.

There was hardly a scholar of note in the world who did not participate. Of American scholars, the principal contributors were S. Schechter, K. Kohler, Z. Lauterbach, L. Ginzberg, and J. D. Eisenstein. Ginzberg contributed over four hundred articles to the Encyclopaedia and many, as in the case of "Cabala" of the nature of a monograph, while Eisenstein is represented by over one hundred and fifty articles.

The *Oẓar Yisrael* is a Hebrew encyclopaedia in ten volumes, published and edited by J. D. Eisenstein. It is inferior in quality to the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* and smaller in quantity. In fact, the larger part of the articles are recasts of those in the latter work, yet it is a scholarly accomplishment of great value. Hundreds of original articles were written by prominent Jewish scholars from a different point of view which is, on the whole, that of traditional Judaism, the spirit which dominates the entire work. It is especially distinguished by its treatment of Halakic and legal subjects to which special attention was paid by the editor. His own articles amount to many hundreds. The *Oẓar* is a contribution to both Jewish learning and Hebrew letters in this country.

ADDITIONS

CHAPTERS II AND III

NOVELS, SHORT STORIES, POEMS, AND DRAMAS OF IBN ZAHAB, HAZAZ, STEINBERG, BROYDES and SHOHAM

i. In Ari Ibn Zahab (Goldstein), Palestinian Hebrew fiction possesses a distinguished representative notable both in the quantity and in the quality of his novels. Though only of middle age, he has already written about twenty-two bellettristic works, most of them novels, some collections of poems, and a few dramas. His forte, however, appears to be the novel. Ibn Zahab belongs to the class of writers whose domain is the portrayal of types or strata of life rather than the delineation of the psychological workings of the individual. His types are, however, not of the common kind, but are rather taken from corners of life which are unnoticed by the average observer and are perceived only by one whose eyes penetrate somewhat deeply into the social complex.

This particular genius of Ibn Zahab is best represented in his three novels—*Ele Maasai ha-Zepatim* (The Journeys of the Grease Merchants), *Shishim Shanah we-Shanah* (Sixty and one Years), and *Be-Sod Aniyé ha-Kotel* (In the Company of the Beggars at the Wailing Wall).

The first novel deals with a segment of Jewish life in the Polish town of Graevo, in the years before the First World War. It is built about the mode of life and the attitudes of several generations of a distinct group of Jews who live their lives upon the borders of both Germany and Poland and who are affected by this fact and by their peculiar and unchanging occupation. One generation after another of this group of families takes up the family trade of dealing in oil which is used for greasing wagons. Although their home is in Graevo, they merely spend the Passover and the fall holiday season there. The rest of the year is spent in wandering from one German village to another plying their trade. They are, by and large, a simple, pious and, with few exceptions, ignorant group of Jews who happen to lead a unique type of life. Ibn Zahab portrays them keenly and ably presents a picture of their feelings and beliefs and the changes that the passage of time and generations works upon them.

The greater number of his sketches deal with the vicissitudes of a single family of such dealers over the course of several generations. The family is made up of the grandfather, Abraham Hayyim, who is nicknamed Esau, because of his ruddy appearance, his son-in-law, Zundel, and his grandson, Moshe Berl. In addition, there is a group of helpers who are of a still lower social stratum—orphans, children of the poorest of the poor, without any Jewish education, who can barely read the prayers. He depicts this family in the foreign land, their relations with the Germans, their struggles to observe their Judaism punctiliously under difficult circumstances, their life at home during the short period of their stay in town, the attitude towards their helpers, and the feelings of the latter towards their employers as well as their striving to become dealers themselves.

Though these are portraits of a group, the individual is not lost. The personality of each of the characters is well projected. Abraham Hayyim, though engrossed in his trade, strives to marry off his daughter to a scholar. He succeeds, but Zundel, unable to make a living from his scholarship, turns tanner and ultimately grease trader. However, he retains the manners and way of life of the scholar even in his wanderings. His greatest dread is that he might die in the foreign land and be buried in its soil as was the case with his father-in-law, Abraham Hayyim. He does not escape this fate entirely, for he dies in a German village, but his son, Moshe Berl, who has followed him in the trade, braves danger and brings the body home to Graevo. Moshe Berl follows his father's way largely, though he is less strict and observant. He is luckier than his father for he dies at home.

Times change, and with it the lives of the traders—largely former helpers—who already are of the younger generation. One of their number, Elkanah, makes a special attempt to adapt himself to the new circumstances. He settles in Germany, loses much of his religion, and manages to remain in Germany during the war and for a decade thereafter. When the Nazi movement rises, he, in his ignorance, even joins the movement and hides his Jewishness. He is detected, however, and ultimately escapes into Palestine. Thus ends the saga of the traders and their world under the sledge-hammer blows of changing time.

The second and third novels or collections of short stories deal with corners of Jewish Palestinian life of the recent past. In the second book, the type of life of a group of residents of Jerusalem whose occupation was hack-driving is described. For a period of sixty odd

years they monopolized the means of transportation from Jerusalem to Jaffa, the port city, and carried travelers between the two cities in carriages and covered wagons. Prior to that, travelers had journeyed in the primitive Eastern way, on donkeys or camels. The first who introduced the wagon and carriage was a benefactor and an inventor, for this new mode of traveling brought about more comfort and ease in Palestinian life. In the course of time the life of this group formed a distinct current in the general stream of Jewish life. Ibn Zahab portrays this current of Jewish life in all its aspects: the success of some of the members of the group and the failure of others, the jealousies, the devices used in competition with each other, and finally the bitter struggles of some members of the group to maintain their trade in the face of changed conditions imposed by the entrance of the automobile and the bus. This work reveals to us a little known phase of Palestinian life of the recent past which had a peculiar color of its own.

The third work portrays another closed corner of Palestinian life which has continued from the past into the present. It possesses a distinctness which almost amounts to uniqueness. It is the story and the mode of life of a group of beggars who ply their trade at the Wailing Wall. The privilege of collecting alms at this sacred wall had for generations been monopolized by the poor Jews who came to Jerusalem from North African countries, especially Morocco. Their vested right was obtained through the sympathetic aid of the Arabs living in the neighborhood of the Wall who were themselves of Moroccan descent. In time these beggars formed a closed group into which no poor hailing from other countries could enter. Eventually, their life became marked by many special characteristics and was impressed by a definite stamp of its own, of which the principal characteristics were poverty and extreme piety leavened by mysticism and superstitious belief. The writer gained his knowledge of these people when he went down to the old section of the city of Jerusalem during the riots in the year 1929 to help protect the Jews living there. During his stay he made the acquaintance of a number of the elders of this beggar community and in numerous conversations he learned of their past and present, of the life of particular individuals, both learned and ignorant, of their successes and failures, their jealousies, passions, schemes and devices which they employed in their trade. He learned, too, of their legends and their tales of wonder rabbis and saints who had displayed their might on behalf of their brethren in the ghettos

of Morocco. This variegated material is elaborated in a series of short stories and portraits. Through them we get more than a glimpse into this exotic pattern of life. It is a life in which poverty and beggary are permanent and ordinary features; few endeavor to escape the pattern, for they consider it not only their lot, a kind of fate to which, like all Orientals, one has to submit with resignation, but also a mode of life which possesses some distinction, for are they not the guardians of the Sacred Wall? Do they not confer some benefit on their benefactors in return for the pennies or small silver coins given them for praying for them? There are the blind and the maimed in this group, but they bear their fate with stoicism and consider their defects a mark of preference for donations, even though they are often cheated by the strong and healthy who inevitably win out in the struggle for existence.

Their life, narrow and confined as it is, mirrors the entire gamut of human passions. On the one hand, jealousy, deceit, greed, and lust are found among them, and on the other hand, deep piety, mercy, and charity. On the whole, this life presents an ugly aspect, but here and there it is shot through with expressions of piety and love of Torah which invest it with inner beauty. For a long time this current of life, though flowing in the midst of a larger rushing stream of life of a great Jewish community, kept within its own confines, but in recent years it has come more and more into contact with the other currents, and its quaintness has begun to fade. This aspect of disintegration and merger has also been noted by the author.

We cannot, however, conclude our survey of Ibn Zahab without a brief estimate of his later novel, *Shylock*, published as late as the beginning of this year. Ibn Zahab gives a Jewish version of that part of the Merchant of Venice which has the Jew as its principal character. Disregarding the part which has the story of the caskets as its motive, he introduces changes in the actions of the dramatis personae, and adds a new character, Don Samuel Moro.

Superfluous to say that Shylock and his daughter fare much better at the hands of Ibn Zahab than at the hands of Shakespeare. They are drawn against the background of the ghetto life, the gloom and misery of which are described by our author with great skill and learning and much detail. Shylock is, of course, a hard man but his hardness is due to the suffering he and his brethren have undergone at the hands of the Christians. He loves money but only as a means of defense in the severe

struggle for Jewish existence. He also loves learning and is interested in art.

Jessica, whom our author calls by the Biblical name Yisca, likewise appears in a much better light. She undergoes a great struggle between her desire to get out of the misery of the ghetto into the great world glistening with all its charms and beauty, and filial piety.

At the trial, Shylock offers not only to forego the money and rescind the bond but to pay a double and triple sum on condition that his daughter be returned. The request is refused and the trial goes on. It is won not by Portia who, according to Ibn Zahab, is the wife of Antonio, but by Don Samuel Moro, the lawyer of Shylock. When Shylock is about to cut the pound of flesh, he totters and mutters, "I cannot do it for I am a Jew." The quality of the work is enhanced by the orderly development of the plot, sequence of events, and by its portrayal of Jewish life in the Venetian ghetto of the 16th century.

ii. Another young Palestinian fiction writer of both short stories and novels, is H. Hazaz. Like many of the Palestinian writers he began his literary career in Russia, and, in fact, most of his short stories portray Jewish life in the Russian town.

The life portrayed in these stories, though, is not the quiet life of pre-World War I which flowed in its narrow channel, the type we so frequently meet in Hebrew fiction, but the stormy one which followed the outbreak of the Russian Revolution during the years 1918-1920. These years brought havoc and destruction to the Jewish town. Overnight all was changed. Age-old forms of life, traditions, and manners were uprooted; the rich and powerful leaders of the community were suddenly lowered to the depth of degradation, while youngsters, the poor employees of the rich of yesterday, most of them ignorant or with very little education became all powerful, and with pistols in their pockets they paraded the streets and tyrannized their elders and betters. True, not all the revolutionary leaders hailed from this stratum; there were in the ranks also children of the middle class and the rich, students of the Gymnasias, Universities, and of Yeshivot, who but a short while ago bent heavily over their books, among them the bulky tomes of the Talmud. Leadership, however, was mostly in the hands of those who could wield a pistol and use it whenever they thought necessary. The intellectuals, the idealists, were mere followers, and at times suffered greatly on witnessing the brutality and the high-handed conduct of the revolutionary leaders in town.

The older generation was confused. Their wealth was gone, their houses taken away, their businesses confiscated, poverty was dominant, and hunger was a frequent guest in their homes. But more than their physical suffering was their mental and spiritual anguish. They were bewildered at the change, and could not understand what had happened to these younger men and women, the docile apprentices of shoemakers, tailors, and carpenters, or clerks and maidservants of but a few weeks ago. Still more were they puzzled by the conduct of their own children who joined the ranks. And they asked themselves, whence this arrogance, whence this brutality, and this desire to rule and oppress? This bewilderment is tersely expressed by a leading character in one of Hazaz' stories, Nathan Note Cohen, when he says to the Commissar of the town, Motye Pickelni, who addresses him as comrade: "Motye, I was an honored guest at your circumcision feast. When did I become your comrade?"

There were times, however, when the newly degraded and declassed entertained respect for the self-proclaimed tyrants, the former clerks and employees. That was when bands of White Russians or rebellious peasants hovered around the town ready to attack and kill the Jews, and the revolutionaries prepared to do battle with them. At times, they were successful and were hailed as protectors.

This panorama of events, mostly tragic or semi-tragic, is depicted with skill in Hazaz' stories. Some of his characters impress us with the nobility of their souls. Such are Samuel Frankfurter in the story which bears his name, and Rabbi Baer in the same story. The first is an idealist, a follower of Tolstoy, who lived an ascetic life before the Revolution. He joined the Revolution because he thought it would realize human equality and bring dignity to the oppressed and down-trodden. The conduct of his comrades vexes him, but he continues to believe in the ideal. When rumors of a brewing rebellion among the peasants of the neighborhood reach him, he goes to the villages to pacify them by quotations from the Bible and holy books which bear messages of kindness. The mission is dangerous, yet he undertakes it and even succeeds. His friend, Rabbi Baer, a scholar and one of the former leading citizens, though bewildered by the change like the rest of his class, does not fall into despair and does not curse the day of his birth like some of his colleagues. He finds that life still has value and can be enjoyed, at least spiritually, for the Torah, prayer, worship of God, and nature are still left. He is even on friendly terms with the

communists, and believes that they are swept away by the storm of revolution, but that inwardly they are still good Jews. He tries again and again, though without success, to persuade them to change their ways.

Nathan Note, one of the characters in the story *Mize u-Mize* (Here and There), does not make peace with the new order, continually complains to God about his fate, and frequently cries while reciting the Psalms, the only comfort which is left to him. His son, Henich, though himself a communist, but intellectually and emotionally far above his colleagues, suffers greatly through the conduct of his friend, the Commissar, Motye Pickelni, who rules the community with an iron hand. Henich dies of tuberculosis and is given an elaborate funeral, the comrades surrounding the coffin with drawn pistols and singing the Internationale. But Nathan Note stands outside of the cemetery and his lips murmur: "God, do not forgive the wicked ones their desecration of the dead", and with streaming tears recites the Kaddish. Thus does Hazaz record moments in Jewish life in the near past in its manifold tragic vicissitudes.

Of the Palestinian stories and novels, the best is the one which bears rather a quaint title, *ha-Yoshevet ba-Ganim* (The Dweller in the Garden). The title is borrowed from Canticles VIII, 13 and has little to do with the content of the book beyond the fact that one of the leading characters, a mystic, uses these words as a basis for a Kabbalistic homily on the coming of the Messiah. The quotation, however, is symbolic of the character of the work which is as exotic as the title. It portrays a particular segment of Palestinian Jewish life, that of the Yemenite Jews. There is very little plot in it, for it is really not a story but a description of the state of mind and the attitude to life of three generations of Yemenite Jews as represented by the members of one family, grandfather, son, and granddaughter. These are the three principal characters, whose views and reactions occupy the greater part of the book, while the few other characters are of minor importance.

The grandfather, Mari Said, deeply steeped in mystic lore, lives in a world of his own, that of Kabbala and vision. With the outbreak of the Second World War, he concentrates all his thoughts and visionary imagination upon one point, redemption and the coming of the Messiah, for it is written in the Talmud that great suffering must precede the coming of the redeemer. He talks of the Messiah by day in long Kabbalistic homilies and dreams of him by night. One of his followers, Mari

Alfaka, is a devoted disciple and dreams along with him. And when the wily Zion, son of Said, asks for a loan to be paid back with interest at the time of the coming of the Messiah, Alfaka complies, though with some hesitation. With the passing of the days Said becomes more and more absorbed in his Messianic visions, and when the Messiah tarries he searches for devices to spur on his arrival. One of these is his advice to Alfaka to take a second wife, a younger one, in order to hasten the redemption by bringing another soul into the world, for as stated in the Talmud, the Messiah's coming depends on exhausting the stock of souls in heaven. Needless to say, Alfaka obeys. Said's longing for the Messiah becomes stronger and stronger until it becomes all mastering, and ultimately he becomes insane and dies shortly thereafter.

Zion, the son, displays the deteriorating effect of maladjustment to a new environment. His contact with a higher type of life of the European Jews in Jerusalem only breeds in him dissatisfaction with the Yemenite way of life, but he makes no attempt to improve conditions. He leaves the care of his family to his wife whom he abuses greatly, while he himself spends his time in idleness and drink. Ultimately, he is even entangled in an illicit love affair with a widow of the neighborhood for whom he leaves his home only to return after his paramour forsakes him.

His daughter, Rumiah, observing the life of the younger generation of Ashkenazic Jews, their free manner, their education, and their better life, struggles against her fate. She cannot bear the poverty of her home, the brutality of her father, or the misery of her mother, and looks for escape, which she finds by joining one of the *Kebuzot* in Palestine. All these changes and vicissitudes are well delineated by Hazaz and we obtain a fair picture of the life of the Yemenite Jews.

Of special interest is his style which he adapts to the type of characters he draws. Thus, Mari Said's visionary monologues which are numerous and lengthy are rendered in a fine modern Hebrew thickly interspersed with Kabbalistic phrases and interpretations of verses, so that there is a harmony between the language and the mood of the speaker. Even the description of the physiognomy of some of his characters bears an intense Jewish stamp. As a result, the reader is imbued with the Jewish spirit of the ages.

iii. Jacob Steinberg (d. 1947), poet, short story writer, and essayist, began his literary activity early in this century and has continued

to produce for a period of forty years. But though he has resided in Palestine for a quarter of a century, the material contained in the three volumes of his collected works published in 1937 displays little of the new life which is gradually emerging in that country. It is primarily stamped with the mark of the *Galut*, or rather with the spirit which dominated the younger generation of Russian Jewry during the first quarter of the present century.

As a poet he is almost the most individualistic of all modern Hebrew poets. He views all the phenomena of nature and life from an exclusively subjective point of view. Neither the intense suffering of Jewry, nor its aspirations and hopes, nor the vision of the rising new life in Judea find any perceptible echo in his poems. The number of poems which can be designated as national are very few, indeed. His poetry can be properly called *Shirat ha-Yahid* (The Song of the Individual).

In fact, in one of his reflective poems on a religious theme, he complains bitterly of the Jewish conception of God which labels Him specifically as Israel's God. Such a conception, in his view, subdues the individual and reduces personal religiosity to a minimum. He cries out, in his plaint, "I was born to a people which possesses laws given by God Himself; and God is One for the whole community." "God of my people, God of the many, what canst Thou give me when my heart fainteth and my knees bend in silence?" (*Bidloḥ ha-Menorah*). He is appalled by the majesty of the God of the world and is in search of a God who is closer and more personal and more anthropomorphic.

From such a state of mind in which the poet, reflecting entirely upon his own soul, faces a turbulent world alone, it is but one step to a pessimistic view, for on the whole, there is more sorrow in the world than joy. And the note of sorrow is dominant in most of Steinberg's poems. He calls it "the eternal sorrow, the heritage of generations." His pessimism and sorrow, however, is not of the type which despises life and considers it a burden and a curse, such as is prominent among poets and thinkers of other nations. As a Jew he loves life and strives to enjoy it, but his sorrow arises first from the struggle which he, a child of the ghetto, must wage to attain that enjoyment, and second from a mood of reflection not unlike that of Kohelet, which penetrates beneath the apparent glitter of life and sees both its hollowness and its fleetingness. These characteristics are not unknown in Hebrew poetry, but they are predominant in Steinberg's. It is because this is his attitude to life that his poems are haunted by the fear of death and by the motive

that life is but a misty dream. He uses these two motives in numerous variations. He sings, as do most poets, of love, but most of his love poems are not of the exuberant type, expressing the sweetness of the moment, or describing the beauty of his beloved; but rather, invariably, they end on a note of sorrow, asserting either that all the joy is but a dream, or worse still, that in the very midst of his rapture he hears the rustling wings of death. He sings of nature and describes its charms with skill, but he invariably detects a dissonant note which disturbs the calmness of his spirit. At times, it is the monotonous rise and fall of the waves, at other times it is the decay of the flowers at the end of summer. It is no wonder then that he is at his best in the description of the night. Its silence and calm transport him to the world of dreams which he loves so much and which fills his soul. And when the first rays of dawn pierce the darkness, his heart is filled with sorrow at the departure of the night with its sweet dreams.

On the whole, nature poems are not Steinberg's forte. He is primarily a poet of life, and his muse is mainly devoted to reflection on life and its vicissitudes. His themes are the futility of the pursuit of wealth or pleasure, the fleetingness of happiness, the tribulation of old age and the fear of its approach, and above all, the terror of death which makes an end to all. (*Ittim, Meholot*). Only at rare moments does he divest himself of the hovering cloud and finds satisfaction in the joy of the moment, whether it be the bright light of a summer morning or the passionate kiss of his beloved. In these gloomy reflections upon life, however, we meet with some themes, as in the poem *Sefer ha-Hayyim* (The Book of Life) which stir both our emotion and thought. In it the poet compares life to a book with which a young child is playing. At first he turns leaf after leaf with glee and a smile of triumph passes over his lips, but soon he is baffled by the mystery of the script, he wearies, and his eyes close, and the book falls from his hand. "And thus," says the poet, "the game ends, just as the game of human life itself comes to a close."

To the group of reflective poems there also belongs one entitled *ha-Pardes* (The Garden). It refers to the Talmudic story of four scholars who entered the garden of mysteries. Three of them lost their way in life and only one, the fourth, entered and left in peace. To Steinberg the garden symbolizes not only mysteries but the entire tradition and the literature accumulated through the ages in which the Jewish people finds it difficult to discover a path of peaceful life. Daring spirits from

time to time have tried to find the path but most of them have lost their way and only a few have succeeded. But, alas, he complains, the secret is lost. There is indeed nothing new in this note of rebellion against encumbering tradition; we have heard it before, but the form of presentation is charming.

Steinberg also has written a number of poems which move us either by their idyllic touch or by their deep pathos or by their symbolic meaning, such as *Ben Shanah* depicting the world of a year-old infant; *ha-Ab we ha-Mowet*, in which a masterly description is given of a father's feelings and thoughts while he holds vigil at the bed of his dying child; *Hymnum El Dimat ha-Yeled* (Hymn to a Child's Tears) which the poet uses as a symbol reflecting life and its trials; and *Deborim* (Bees) where the life of the drones, full of toil, is poetically described and the moral is drawn that the ceaseless toil of that insect on behalf of others is proof that the impulse for the continuation of life is all-powerful.

Steinberg has written a few national poems dealing with the rebuilding of Palestine, but these are not outstanding. He is primarily the poet of life and thought.

As a short story writer Steinberg, on the whole, follows the well-trodden path of modern Hebrew fiction in his selection of themes. Like other writers, he depicts episodes of Jewish life in the small town of the Ukraine or Wohlynia, with its drab colors, the petty struggles of its inhabitants for existence, and the tragedies which ensue from that struggle. The life depicted is that of the first decade of this century when the town was already wide open to the influences of the great world, and the youth no longer had to struggle for the right to engage in secular studies or to follow new ways of life. Yet tradition continued to impose a number of restraints upon action, and rebellious spirits still chafed under them and the results were tragic. It is these events which Steinberg employs as themes for his stories. Thus one is the story of a young woman who under the pressure of paternal urging marries a man whom she does not love and represses her love for a former suitor who has been taken into the army. But when her husband falls sick and is about to die she again meets her former lover and feels the old love rekindled. (*Bastanim*). Another tale concerns the suicide of the daughter of a Rabbi who had made a false step before her marriage and cannot bear to face the consequences. A dominant theme in the stories is the consciousness of poverty which weighs heavily upon the

younger people of the town and is especially accentuated when they come in contact with the rich. The theme of one story is the struggle of a young clerk who, on his return from the large city to his poor family in the town, represses his inferiority complex in the presence of the rich and attempts to meet them as an equal. For a short time, due to his acquaintance with the son of the rich man in town, a student in the school of the big city, and his skill at cards, he is admitted to the company of the wealthy families. He is encouraged in his endeavors and even dares to make love to the daughter of the house. But suddenly he is rebuffed and his dream vanishes. (*Mishakim*). Another story deals with the effect of poverty upon the soul of a child. It is about a poor boy whose eyes are treated gratis by a kind physician but whose spirit is mortified by his contact with a boy of his own age who always boasts of the large fee he brings the physician at every visit. This constant reminder of his inferior position pains the poor child deeply and he is relieved only when ultimately, due to the sickness of the physician, he ceases to visit him. (*Ahrit ha-Rofe*). The same theme in a more accentuated form is dealt with in the story *Halom* (A Dream). The son of a poor family who, after much struggle has succeeded in obtaining the degree of doctor of philosophy in a university, returns home for a few months of rest and scholarly work. He plans to write a book in which he expects to demonstrate to the world the glory of Judaism and thus lend honor to his people. The drab reality of poverty in his home, and the slavish subjection of his father to his employer, a rough business man, however, depress him greatly and he finds himself unable to begin the work. And when he accompanies his father to the house of the rich man where he is treated by the younger members of the family with an outward show of respect but with concealed contempt, he feels depressed and becomes painfully conscious of the futility of his dream.

Steinberg also achieves another vein in his work. He frequently uses the story medium to picture certain fine traits of the Jewish character. One of the best of these is the short sketch entitled *Yelalah* (Weeping). A number of Jewish families related to each other, live together in their large ancestral house situated near the police station of the town. For years the families have lived peacefully in the house. But one night a thief caught in the street is brought to the station where he is severely beaten. His cries penetrate into the house and the families are greatly disturbed. And as the cries do grow louder and louder the pity in the hearts of the members of the families rises to a degree of painfulness.

They cannot bear to hear and participate in human suffering. To avoid being subjected to a similar ordeal they sell the house. The Jewish town portrayed in these stories is gone forever, but the tragedies in the lives of the people who inhabited it are general tragedies, and the traits of character displayed are human traits. They continually recur in varied forms. These stories are, therefore, not only of historical interest, but remain as penetrating expressions of life in general.

As an essayist Steinberg has sought to become a master of the short essay, a form semi-poetical and semi-satirical, which deals either with a single event or with certain specific features in the life of the group. Essays of this type comprise the larger part of the third volume of his collected writings. Ironically, however, the few longer ones in the volume excel the others. Of these *Yerushalayyim* and *ha-Shurah* (The Line) are particularly good. In the first Steinberg tries to describe the character of that ancient city. He finds its peculiarity not in the buildings which, on the whole, are not very old, and with the exception of the Wailing Wall, are all of post-Temple times, but rather in the indefinable spirit which is in the very air. It is this ancient spirit, hailing from before the destruction, which was preserved through the ages in spite of all the vicissitudes which had passed over the city, and despite the numerous attempts of many nations and races to impress their stamp upon it. Jerusalem, says the author, did not absorb any strange spirit, but embalmed its own, the very one which permeated it before the walls were destroyed by the Roman legions. But even this spirit was itself a composite and contained the heritage of countless generations, especially those of the Biblical period. Steinberg digresses at this point and writes an essay within an essay on the spirit of the Bible which has been absorbed into Jerusalem. It is this spirit which invests that hoary city with uniqueness, and which penetrates its life and affords variety to the character of its inhabitants.

The second essay represents an excursion into literary criticism and an attempt to determine the essential quality which makes poetry great. He finds this quality in the strength and vigor of the single line. It is not the glamor of fine phraseology nor the glitter of sparkling rhyme and exact metre which imparts greatness to poetry, but the depth of thought and the inner harmony of words with which the poet can endow his single line, which supply that quality. He supports his thesis by numerous quotations beginning with the Bible and ending with the poems of Bialik and Sheneor. In a shorter essay on the same subject

Shidofon (Emptiness) in which he applies the same standard to prose writing, and in which he also contends that the individual sentences should convey thoughts and not be merely parts of jumbled paragraphs, he offers a fine illustration of his point. The value of a field of grain, says he, is not measured by its extent nor by the beauty of the flowers therein, but by whether or not the ears are full of grain. Similarly, a prose composition is estimated by the fullness of the single sentences.

Unfortunately, Steinberg does not live up to his own standard, for in a large number of the short essays his style is quite involved and it is difficult to find a complete thought even in a paragraph. A considerable part of these essays are of a publicistic nature, censuring various defects in the social life of Palestine in the late thirties. Others, which deal with Biblical subjects possess great interest. Steinberg is a great admirer of the Bible and he finds in its books all manner of beauty which he seeks to reveal in these essays. However, the value of these essays is often lessened by derogatory remarks against the Talmud and later Rabbinic literature.

Steinberg often oversteps the limit, and in many of his publicistic essays in which he criticizes phenomena in Jewish life there are too many barbs at the Jewish character. This tendency reached its culmination in his essay *Morashat ha-Galut* (The Heritage of Exile) in which he not only minimizes the value of the entire post-Biblical literature, from the Mishnah to the works of the Haskalah, as well as all the great works produced by Jews in European languages, but stigmatizes them as *Galut* literature which will exert little influence in the future Judea. As I have no conception of the future he visions for Judea it would be futile to enter into a discussion. We can only say that such essays typify *Shidofon* (Emptiness) in extreme degree. They do not, however, lessen the value of the good qualities found in many of his other essays.

iv. Among the younger Palestinian poets who have achieved prominence in recent years is Abraham Broydes, whose first collection of poems entitled *Emunim* (Loyalties) appeared in 1936. He can be considered a Palestinian, not only by virtue of his residence in that land, but by the very content of his poetry, which is almost entirely devoted to Erez Yisrael, its glories and its rehabilitation. Like most of the Hebrew bards of Palestine he came originally from Russia, but as he says in one of his poems, he treads only one path in life and in the world, the one leading to the rehabilitation of the ancient land of

his people which has become his land. On it he concentrates all his hopes and aspirations for the light which will illuminate his life tomorrow. It is no wonder, then, that he does not tire of singing of the glories of that land and of the new life which is being created there by the hardy young pioneers of whom he is one.

Broydes is not a prolific poet nor are his songs long and rich in dazzling phraseology. He is, on the whole, a poet of miniatures, of short poems which express and reflect a single flutter of his soul, whether of joy at the sight of beauty in nature and life, or of sorrow at suffering and frustration. His poems are, however, endowed with a special quality, being imbued with the glow of love for the land, for his people, and for humanity, flowing forth from a delicate and sensitive soul. It is for this reason that joy and sorrow, hope and despair find expression in his poem. Nothing is too small to disturb his spirit or to move it to joy and hope. The sight of a mule, wincing under the lash of the driver and yet not moving from his place, calls him to reflection on the sorrow of existence and draws him to a comparison between the mule and himself. Like the mule, he, too, suffers the lashes of destiny, and like it, he plods the path of toil, though at times his soul rebels against his fate. (*Tahat Shamayyim T'chulim*).

Above all else, his poetry breathes a love for the land of Israel. He is conscious of the tribulations of the pioneers, the hard work, the heat, and the poor fare, but the beautiful skies of Palestine make him forget his sorrow and his heart fills with love. In such moments he sings a hymn to the land, his land, and to its quiet cool nights which make him forget the burning winds of the desert which blow during the day, for he says, "I dream and am intoxicated as my heart rests in the hollow of that land" (*Zot Arzi*).

In such a mood he becomes the poet of the *Haluzim* (pioneers) and sings an ode to the woman stone breaker whose every stroke of the hammer finds an echo in his heart and arouses excitement in his small world (*La-Soteset*). He surrounds their hard work in the unyielding parched soil with a halo. Day after day they express in their work the energy of their youth; with trepidation they scatter to the four winds their dreams and the longings of their hearts, but, says he, "We cling to the clods in mountain and valley, and in the heat of the sun and in the drenching of the rain our hearts will be purified" (*Nof ha-Ziah*).

Of the few nature poems, those that have rain as their motive excel not only in description but in the expression of the deep emotion which

rain stirs in the heart of the farmer in Palestine. The patter of the drops of rain is music to him and the smell of the wet grass is sweeter than perfume. In this field, says the poet, we *Haluzim* listen quietly to the echo of the sprouting plants and sing of the hour when our hands will be filled with the first sheaves of ripening grain (*Zu Helkat Sode*).

The attack of the Arabs on the Jewish colonies in the year 1936, during which a number of people were killed, disturbed the love-saturated soul of the poet greatly, and he unburdened himself in a number of songs, some of sorrow, some of hope. In one of these he prays to God to instill iron in his body and endow him with power to bear the load of sorrow which presses upon him. In others he calls to the settlers of the *Emek* (Valley of Jezreel) for unflinching loyalty to their great task in spite of the obstacles. In prophetic language he proclaims, "Even if the desert lurks, and evil spreads snares, we will remain stiff-necked and slow of retreat. When hard labor tires us by day and the watch keeps us from sleep at night, then we will join body to body by song, the song of loyalty and pain. The vision of labor sanctified by the blood of the fallen will never fade, and the light of loyalty will shine in every way and path" (*Emunim*). He calls again and again to the pioneers to be steadfast, to strengthen weak hands and to harden soft hearts, to continue to shatter the mighty rocks, and to open the furrows and spread the seed, for the sower carries with him the message of growth to which the echo of peace will respond.

In his later collection, *La-Ed* (As a Witness), containing many poems written during the years of World War II when the great catastrophe overtook the Jews of Europe, the leading motive is that of deep sorrow and wailing over the fate of his brethren. He is completely crushed by the terrors and his poems become cries of anguish and broken sobs. Some of them stir the soul by their very brevity and simplicity, as when he says, "A voice cries to me, sinner, for you live and breathe at a time when your brothers are stabbed and murdered." Yet hope, he feels, is not entirely gone, and when he tells his young son of the fate of thousands of wandering Jewish orphans he concludes, "Know, my boy, that thou art their brother. Grow up and bring a ray of light into the life of these waifs whose day was darkened so early." Thus, there rings in the poems of this young Palestinian poet the echo of a soul filled with joy at the rise of a new life in the ancestral land and deep sorrow at the destruction of an old life in the lands of dispersion.

v. In addition to the dramas described above (Sec. 33), Matityahu

Shoham has written two more plays on Biblical subjects, *Zor we-Yerushalayyim* (Tyre and Jerusalem), published in 1933 and *Elohé Barzel* (The God of Iron), published in 1934. The central theme of both dramas is the struggle of the true representatives of Judaism with the lure of the surrounding civilization in their endeavor to realize the high ideals of their religion. But, unlike the earlier productions in which the author displays a spirit of revolt against the moral rigor embodied in the Biblical narratives of the episodes dealt with, these plays present a calmer and less rebellious attitude towards the ideals of the Biblical view of life. We can note a streak of sympathy on the part of Shoham for the ideals of Judaism and a note of approval of the sentiments expressed by its champions. The ten years which have elapsed between the writing of the first two dramas and the latter two—years of trial and tribulation for the Jews of the world—have apparently left a deep impression upon the author.

The first of these dramas deals with several episodes in the life and reign of Ahab, King of Israel, and of his Tyrian queen Jezebel. Like his earlier dramas, it is divided into three acts with only an implied subdivision of scenes. The dramatis personae are Ahab, Jezebel, the prophet Elijah, Micayahu, one of his disciples, Elisha, the successor of Elijah, Yoram, king of Judah—all of whom are mentioned in the Bible—and, in addition, a non-Biblical character, Aḥikar, a Tyrian-born sage who has spent the greater part of his life in wandering. Besides these there are several minor characters.

The principal characters are Jezebel and Elijah. The former represents the embodiment of Canaanite civilization which saturated with passion, lust, and love of pleasure, considered the satisfaction of the sexual instinct a holy and religious rite. She is pictured as attempting to force her civilization upon the Jews and to introduce into the land of Ephraim the customs and the mode of life of Tyre, as well as the worship of its god, Baal. Elijah, the stern prophet of the one God, whose worship is preserved in its purity in Jerusalem, but to whom the northern kingdom also owes its allegiance, represents the civilization of Jerusalem, and in the name of that God, he strives to rescue his people from sinking into the mire of moral dissolution. It is the story of this struggle which the author presents in his drama.

Jezebel dominates the scene. She possesses a strong character and uses her tried weapon, her ample feminine charms skilfully and frequently upon all who come near her. Among those who are caught

in her net is Elisha, who has been enslaved by passion and who quaffs gleefully from the cup of pleasure and joy administered by the queen. The first act which contains little action and many passionate speeches is almost entirely devoted to a portrayal of Jezebel. The opening scene catches her in the act of signing the death warrant of Nabot who has refused to sell his vineyard to Ahab, and it continues with a dialogue in which the queen takes the leading part. In her speeches she glorifies pleasure, love, and life, and expresses her hatred for the God of Jerusalem and His sternness and also for Elijah whom she hates personally because he had once spurned her favors. Her greatest ambition is to entice him again and thus wreak her vengeance upon him and upon his God. She sends Elisha, who has meanwhile been anointed by a messenger of Elijah as the future prophet, to bring Elijah to her. He obeys reluctantly. Towards the end of the act, Ahab, after witnessing the slaughter of eight hundred prophets of Baal, appears in his palace and prepares for war with Aram. He is a tragic character for he oscillates between Jezebel and Elijah, both of whom he fears and to both of whom he is also attracted.

The second act, laid at the entrance of the cave of Elijah, is devoted to Elisha, Ahab, Elijah, and the wandering Tyrian sage, Ahikar. A tragic note runs through the larger part of it. Elisha struggles against the task which Elijah wishes to impose upon him, to assume the burden of prophecy. But ultimately he yields. Ahab, who escapes thither from the battlefield, pleads before his death for some sign of comfort, to be shown a vision that Israel will yet be victorious over its enemies. Instead, the prophet portrays a Messianic future when peace will reign all over. The dying king is unsatisfied and filled with love for his people he begs for present good rather than for future greatness. Elijah himself, in laying his charge upon the reluctant Elisha, is oppressed by his past life filled with the burden of zeal and sternness, and longs for a message of comfort, of mercy. Only Ahikar escapes the tragic note. He, too, hates the spirit of Jerusalem and cynically disparages the role of the prophet who looks toward the End of Days and grieves at the present, but he understands his nature, and cynic though he is, appreciates his strength.

In the third act, laid once more in the palace at Shomron, Jezebel again dominates the scene. Ahab is dead, and her son, Jehoram, is a weakling and she is the real ruler. She still hopes to subdue everyone by her wiles, and, as before, showers her favors upon all close to her. She

has a new host of lovers; even Salu, the son of Nabot, whose death she caused, is ensnared in her meshes. She makes love to Joram, King of Judea, the son-in-law of Ahab, who comes as message bearer from his father, Jehoshaphat. He, too, is opposed to the spirit of Jerusalem and longs for the grand pleasures of the palace of Jezebel. She still hopes for the coming of Elijah for whom she sent Elisha, and when the message is brought that Elijah has disappeared in a storm and ascended to heaven, she is sorely disappointed. But she sends for Elisha and plans a final battle against the God of Jerusalem together with her boon companions, Aḥikar and Joram. The Tyrian sage proposes not a battle waged with sword and spear, but one in which beautiful statuary, feminine charm, and the power of pleasure will be the weapons. He hopes that these will slowly capture the hearts of all Jews, both of Israel and Judah, and that the rebellion will then break forth. In the midst of the hilarity, Elisha, dressed in the mantle of Elijah, breaks in and thunders in the name of the Lord, and all hopes of Jezebel are dashed.

On the whole, there is much strength in the drama, and the struggle between the spirit of Tyre and that of Jerusalem is portrayed with great skill. The emphasis, however, is laid rather on the portrayal of the spirit of Tyre than that of Jerusalem. Passage upon passage speak in glowing terms of beauty, of passion, of the love of the daughters of Tyre in their naked splendor, while the sublimity of the spirit of Jerusalem is less fully treated. Are these signs of the inclination of the author himself or merely a device to heighten the conquest of Jerusalem?

We can forgive the author his deviations from the Biblical narrative in making Ahab die at the feet of Elijah instead of on the battle-field, or in picturing Elisha as one of the golden youth surrounding Jezebel rather than as a peaceful farmer ploughing his field. These are merely devices employed in order to bring out both the tragedy and intensity of the struggle. But the failures do not explain why this Elisha was chosen by Elijah as his successor when Elisha, enslaved and ensnared, was still crouching at the feet of Jezebel, and had not yet displayed even a single mark of distinction.

The second drama turns to an earlier section of the Bible and affords us a picture of Abraham, the Father of the Jewish people. It is principally concerned with his war against the four kings who devastated Sodom and its surrounding cities and captured Lot, as well as with the later destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by a rain of sulphur

and brimstone. The life of Abraham, the herald of monotheism, has of late attracted the attention of several novelists who have endeavored to interpret the appearance and deeds of this remarkable Biblical personality. Shoham too has found Abraham a suitable theme for a drama. But it is not the character of Abraham which he seeks to present. As in the first drama, it is the struggle between the ideals of Abraham who symbolizes Judaism, and those of the nations who worship might and physical power, that forms the motive of the play. This drama, too, contains three acts each of which has a number of implied scenes. The *dramatis personae* are Abraham; his wife Sarah; his nephew Lot; Hagar, his maid-servant; Gog, the general of the king of the North who is a cousin of Abraham on his mother's side; Eliezer, the manager of his estate; Melchizedek, King of Jerusalem, uncle of both Abraham and Gog, for his sisters were their mother; Bera, King of Sodom; Bera's daughter, Keturah; Yuta and Dana, daughters of Lot; three princes hailing respectively from the land of the North, from Crete, and from India; nobles from Egypt; messengers from Amrophel, King of Babylon; and several minor characters. The land of the North, though not described exactly, is referred to several times under the name of Ashkenaz and Gomer (Gen. X, 3) which would indicate lands north of Babylon.

The principal characters are Abraham and Gog, the former representing idealism, and the latter brute force, and the theme is the struggle between the two. Written in the years 1933-1934, when the shadow of Hitler had already fallen upon Europe and the war of the Germans against the Jews had already begun—the drama clearly echoes these events. Even the nomenclature is employed with this intention, for the people of the North are referred to as residents of Ashkenaz and Gomer—the first being the name in later Hebrew for Germany and the second resembling it in sound. There are, of course, other notes in the play as well. The life of Abraham's family, the tragic fate of the childless Sarah, the love of Hagar for Abraham, the birth of Ishmael, and the role of Lot and his daughters—all play a part in the drama.

On the whole, there is little action, for such events as the tribulation of Hagar after having been driven out by Sarah, the war of the five kings with the four, and the pursuit of Abraham after the four are only referred to, but not described. The strength of the drama, as of the previous one, lies primarily in dialogues and soliloquies. The author has skillfully utilized the Biblical narrative and has even at times

drawn upon Agadic statements, as for example, in making Lot a judge in Sodom (see Rashi to Gen. XI, 1). However, he uses his material to a considerable extent freely, and often deviates considerably from the Biblical account. Thus he has Hagar driven out before the birth of Isaac and not afterwards as in the Bible narrative. Lot is not in Sodom at the time of the destruction, but at the wedding feast of Gog and Bera's daughter which is celebrated in the house of Abraham, and thus is Bera, King of Sodom, also saved from a cruel death. All these are devices designed to heighten the dramatic effect of the struggle and its ultimate result.

The first act is laid at the camp of Abraham in the valley between Sodom and Hebron. In the opening scene, Hagar, through her soliloquies and her dialogues with Egyptian nobles residing with Abraham and her talks to Eliezer reveals her secret love for Abraham. This is followed by the appearance of the three princes who, while waiting for Gog, express their views of life. The Northern one speaks of force as the arbiter of the fates of nations and glorifies Gog and his might. The Cretan boasts of the seamanship of his people and their skill in the art of metallurgy, while the Indian talks of the science of astronomy and astrology. In the midst of the discussion, Gog, Sarah, and several Babylonian emissaries, who have come to persuade Abraham to side with Amrophel against the cities of Sodom, arrive on the scene. A discussion develops among the emissaries, Sarah, Gog, and Abraham. The emissaries attempt to influence Sarah to persuade Abraham to join their side. Gog, who is their ally, speaks of the tradition of Gomer to follow the strong and bear contempt for the weak, and challenges Abraham to adopt this view. The latter expresses his hatred for this tradition as well as his hope for peace among nations, the new ideal which he champions. He is joined by Lot who in a half-drunken manner satirizes the views of Gog and the emissaries. Sarah is at first disinclined to side with the local rebels against Babylonia and gives vent to her plaint about the fate of the immigrant whose contributions are not remembered. But hearing the words of Abraham, she expresses her regrets, and meanwhile reveals her great humility and sorrow at the fact that she has not been able to bear him an heir. In this mood she advises him to take Hager for a concubine. Sarah leaves, and on her leaving, there follows a dialogue between Abraham and Hagar in which she indirectly reveals her great love for him and he ultimately enters her tent.

The second act, laid at a hill not far from Abraham's camp, reveals Hagar and Eliezer waiting for the return of Abraham from his pursuit of the kings. They are soon joined by Sarah. A messenger arrives who at first attempts to deceive the group with a false report that Abraham has been captured, but his dissimulation is recognized by Sarah, whereupon he tells of Abraham's victory. Gog arrives and relates that he had forsaken his allies and joined Abraham. In a number of monologues addressed to Sarah and Lot, he sings paeans to the lord of war and glorifies his strength and his conquest, all in an attempt to impress Sarah for whom he cherishes an ardent love. He develops his race theory which proclaims the right of the conquerors to enslave the conquered on the ground that the weak have no rights. He disparages Abraham for his peaceful work and visions. He is followed by the Northern prince who repeats the utterance of Gog with even greater vehemence. Sarah, in her turn, eulogizes Abraham whose work and visions bring happiness to humanity.

The third act is laid in the camp of Abraham where a feast is prepared for the wedding of Gog and Keturah, the daughter of Bera, King of Sodom. Before the guests arrive, a conversation takes place between Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar who has returned from her flight into the desert to submit to Sarah. Sarah manifests the full excellence of her character. She regrets her treatment of Hagar and apologizes to Abraham for her action. He comforts her and tells her of God's promise to him that he will have a son by her. And when she asks him whether he has asked for a sign from God, he replies that he needs no sign, for he is fully saturated with trust in his God. He further asserts his confidence in the ultimate victory of his ideal over the force of Gog. The struggle has just begun and is destined to last through the generations, but at the end his ideals will prevail.

Meanwhile Gog and the Northern prince plan to attack Abraham during the feast, overpower him, and capture Sarah. Abraham is not unaware of the plot and secretly prepares for the defense. The feast takes place. Keturah, Gog, Bera, and the guests arrive. At the feast, Gog, to whom this marriage is only a device to enable him to seize the cities of the Jordan Valley and enslave all Canaan, expresses his views in monologue after monologue and glorifies his strength, his mighty sword destined to rule the world, and especially his new weapons which are being prepared for him in the Valley by the Cretan prince, master of the science of metallurgy. But the unexpected happens; a continual

rumbling is heard and Lot arrives and tells the awful story of the destruction of Sodom which resulted from the explosion of the very powerful engines of war which the Cretan was preparing for Gog. The explosion has ruined not only Sodom and its neighboring cities, but the plans of Gog as well. In his defeat he turns to Abraham and says, "We will meet again in future times," to which the reply of Abraham is, "I am ready for the struggle."

Shoham's attempt to frame the tremendous events of our times in an ancient setting is carried out with great skill, and the symbolic failure of Gog encourages our eternal hope that the victory lies with Abraham and his ideals and that brute force must ultimately crumble under its own power of destruction. Still, the drama is an inadequate allegory. The tragedy of present day events is not fully expressed and Gog is only a shadow of the Hitlerian type which he is supposed to represent. There is also an excessive amount of repetition and the numerous speeches of Gog and his followers, the Northern princes, have a monotonous quality. These slight defects, however, do not minimize the worth of the drama which is distinguished by its daring attempt to grapple with a great theme, its fine portrayal of Biblical scenes, and its vigorous and rich language. Hebrew literature has indeed sustained a great loss by the premature death of this young poet.

CHAPTER XI

ASAF'S SOURCE BOOK; LESCHZINSKY'S STUDIES IN ECONOMIC HISTORY; KAUFMANN'S GOLE WE-NEKAR; KLATZKIN'S TEḤUMIM.

i. S. Asaf's three volume work, entitled *Sources for the History of Jewish Education* has been dealt with partially in the main body of this book (p. 807f.). The second and third volumes of this significant contribution to Jewish history merit more extended treatment at this point.

Volume II is devoted to sources which illustrate the state of Jewish education during the entire Mediaeval period in Spain, southern France, and Italy, while Volume III covers the lands of the East during the same period, including practically all the countries which were formerly embraced in the Turkish Empire, as well as the Balkans and some Jewish settlements in North Africa.

The excerpts collected in the volumes are drawn from a great variety of sources, such as Responsa, Codes, ethical works, historical treatises, and communal documents which deal especially with the subject of education. It is this variety which enhances the value of the work, for taken together these documents present a fair picture of the state of education in important Jewish centers during a thousand year period. We learn not only of the high value placed by the Jews on the education of their children and the exceptional efforts they made on its behalf, but also of the manner in which schools were organized, the status of the teachers, and the methods of teaching.

On the whole, Jewish education in the Provence and Spain was distinguished by a liberal spirit and by breadth of curriculum. Time and again, scholar after scholar emphasizes the need for the study of Hebrew grammar, for the mastery of the Hebrew language, for a thorough grounding in the Bible, and also for a fair acquaintance with the sciences of the day. The high value placed on education and the acquisition of learning can be gleaned from the following facts. Judah Ibn Tibbon, who translated many works from Arabic into Hebrew, paid the sum of thirty gold dinars a year for the instruction of his son

Samuel. Again, in a Responsum of Asher ben Yehiel, we are told that a *Dayan* fined a member of the community for refusing to lend a book to a fellow scholar and that Asher approved of his act.

The Jews of Italy distinguished themselves in their endeavors to impart Jewish knowledge to their children and spared no efforts to accomplish this purpose. They gave prizes to students who excelled in studies, established dormitories for out-of-town pupils, and introduced compulsory education. A number of communities enacted ordinances that no Jewish child might leave school before sixteen years of age and fixed a fine for both parents who transgressed the ordinance and merchants and master craftsmen who engaged the youngsters under that age as clerks or apprentices. They also appointed truant officers to bring shirking pupils to school. In addition, they attempted to introduce formal adult education and established evening courses for those who had already left school. Similar methods were used in a number of communities in the Turkish Empire in the 16th century. Thus, the Jewish community of Smirna enacted an ordinance that guilds of crafts should not engage apprentices who lacked a certain minimum of Jewish knowledge, and provided that if the apprentice was deficient in such knowledge the officers were to engage a teacher for him at the expense of the guild. It is also worth noting that in Italy a considerable number of women teachers were employed in communal schools, especially in the elementary classes, in spite of the direct prohibition in the Mishnah of such practice, and that even a Palestinian school in the 17th century was not averse to the appointment of a woman teacher.

This bright picture of the status of Jewish education, however, also has its shadows. In a Responsum written by a Bagdad Rabbi, we read of a case where a man was betrothed to a girl, but later changed his mind merely because the girl was the daughter of a teacher, and he felt that it was beneath his dignity to marry her. The Rabbi, of course, rebukes the groom and decides in favor of the girl. But the inquiry reminds us somewhat of the social status of Hebrew teachers in our own day.

The excerpts also throw light upon numerous other phases of Jewish life. Thus we read in a Responsum of Hai Gaon (988-1038) that Gentile children used to attend Jewish schools, which fact proves not only the breadth of the curriculum which undoubtedly included secular subjects, but also the exceptional relations between the Jews and their neighbors. Thus we learn from the writing of Saadia (10th century) that the famous Bible critic, Hivi Al-Balkhi, against whom Saadia polemized,

composed an abridgment of the Pentateuch from which all passages telling of miracles as well as other sections to which he objected were deleted, and that this book was used as a text book in some schools.

ii. Important contributions in the field of social and economic history of the Jews, especially in modern times, have been made by Jacob Leschzinsky in numerous essays in various publications and in several works in Yiddish and German. These deal primarily with Jewish statistics, the economic situation of the Jews in Poland and Germany during the two decades between the two World Wars, and with Jewish migration during the last hundred years. In view of the fact that World War II has practically wiped out the great Polish and German Jewries, the works on the economic status of these Jewries have lost much of their value and are of interest only to specialists in the field.

Of greater and wider interest is Leschzinsky's statistical essay *Das Yiddische Folk in Zifferen* (Statistics of the Jewish People), for though it was published in 1922 and the statistical figures given there are for that period, the essay in reality contains much more than mere statistics of population. In fact, the statistical figures of the Jewish population in the world constitute the less important part of the work for they are not exactly correct, as they are based on censuses taken years before 1922. Thus, his estimate of the Jewish population in the Russian Empire on the eve of World War I, which includes also the Jews of the Polish provinces, is based on the census of 1897 plus a probable addition, for the two succeeding decades, of another three quarters of a million. Similar estimates which are based on probabilities rather than on exact figures are also made for the other countries. His estimate that the world Jewish population on the eve of World War I consisted of 14 million cannot, therefore, be considered exact and is, in all probability, an underestimate. But, there are other features in this essay which are of greater permanent value. These are: first, the attempt to estimate the rate of increase of the Jewish population from 1800 to 1914, and, second, a statement of the reasons for such increase. According to Leschzinsky the number of Jews in the world at the end of the 18th century was about 2½ million. By 1914 a figure between 14 and 15 million had been reached, which represented close to a six-fold increase. The general population in Europe, on the other hand, increased only three-fold, from 191 million in 1804 to 525 million in 1910. He attributes this exceptional increase of the Jews to a smaller infant mortality and to the better adaptability of the Jews to urban life.

Non-Jews on the other hand, apparently, adapted themselves less readily to the life of the city. During the 19th century great masses of villagers settled in cities and towns, abandoning agriculture for work in factories and shops and, in consequence, suffered an increase in the rate of mortality.

The bulk of the book is devoted to a statistical survey of the gradual increase of the Jewish population in various countries during the 114 years and also to their distribution in certain regions of those countries. Special emphasis is laid upon the concentration of the Jews in the large cities, and comparisons are made between the percentages of Jews in large cities and those of the general population. The distribution and the concentration of the Jewish population are not only illustrated by statistical tables but are also coordinated with the economic changes which took place in general life, and particularly in Jewish life, during the period and which acted as causes of these phenomena. The work thus throws much light upon the social and economic life of the Jews during a period of over one hundred years.

Of still greater interest is his work *Wohin Gehen Mir?* (Whither Are We Going) which deals with Jewish immigration during the last 100 years, namely from 1840 to the present day. It contains both statistical material and an analysis of the causes as well as the effects of these migrations upon Jewish life. Migrations, says the author, form an important factor in the history of the Jews in the long period of dispersion. In the past, he claims, these migrations acted as a safeguard against assimilation. Had the Jews not changed their settlement from one land to another, the slow process of assimilation to the general culture of the lands of their residence would gradually have undermined their own culture and integrity. On migrating to a new land, they not only took along with them their own religion and their cultural and national institutions, but the forced isolation which the new country imposed upon them for a time was instrumental in Judaizing even those cultural patterns which they had originally borrowed from their former land of residence. They thus enriched their own spiritual life and were strengthened against a new assimilation. He cites as an example the gradual change of the German language spoken in Mediaeval times by the Jews of Germany into Yiddish through the migration of a large number of German Jews into Poland and other Slavonic countries. In the course of time Yiddish became a cultural and national asset for a large part of European Jewry and strengthened their bond

of unity even after they migrated to other countries. As another instance of how migration lessens a tendency toward assimilation he cites the migration of a large number of Polish Jews in the 17th century after the Chmelnicki massacres as well as the later infiltration of thousands of East-European Jews in the 19th century into the West-European countries. Both these migrations strengthened Judaism to a marked degree in the new countries where the immigrants settled.

The situation has changed in the present century. By the end of the last century, due to a variety of causes, especially to the process of cultural assimilation among Jews, which had been going on for at least half a century in many European countries, Jewish unity was broken to a large extent, and groups of Jews migrating from various countries had become estranged from each other in language, culture and religious attitude. There arises, therefore, a danger that the continued existence of the new settlements in the many lands whither Jews have gravitated in the last two decades will be greatly threatened. Both the influence of the cultures of the new countries of settlement and the divisions within the Jewish group prevent united action on behalf of Jewish integrity. The situation is especially precarious, according to Leschzinsky, among the immigrant Jews hailing from different lands, in countries where the settlements are small, such as in the smaller countries of South America. However, he takes comfort from the rise of a great new Jewish center in Palestine where all such dangers are removed and a new great unity is in the process of creation.

The book thus contains a statement of the causes of Jewish immigration and affords us an elucidating glimpse of the economic and social factors which were conducive to Jewish immigration before the great catastrophe of World War II. In addition, the author includes a special section on migration of Jewish children during the time of this catastrophe in which are included a number of heartrending descriptions of such migrations culled from newspaper reports. He has thus saved these tragic episodes from oblivion.

The work as a whole constitutes a notable contribution not only to the history of Jewish immigration but also towards the understanding of a grave Jewish problem which will face us for a number of years to come.

iii. A notable contribution to historical literature and indirectly to the philosophy of Jewish nationalism is the two-volume work of Ezekiel Kaufmann, *Gole we-Nekar* (Exile and Alienism). The purpose of the

treatise, as the author indicates in his Preface, is to determine why the Jewish people deviated in the course of its life history from the path trodden by many other nations under similar circumstances. In other words, he proposes to offer a reason for the two phases of the perplexing problem, namely, why did the Jews survive during their two millennial exile or dispersion when all other nations, subjected to similar circumstances, disappeared; and also why, in spite of their long sojourn in many countries, they are regarded, openly or covertly, as a foreign element in the general body politic of the various countries?

In carrying out his task, the author treats his subject in a very embrative manner, undertaking studies touching on many subjects, such as a critical analysis of the various interpretations of the fundamental character of Jewish history in Exile; the universalism of Judaism and its relation to paganism, Christianity, and Islam; the religious national particularism of the Jewish people; the struggle of the Jews in dispersion for existence; a review of modern Jewish history and its leading trends of assimilation and of renaissance; the rise of nationalism in Western Europe and its reflection in Jewish life; a critical survey of the various Jewish national philosophies propounded by thinkers during the last half century; and finally, his own solution to the grave Jewish problem of dispersion and alienism.

Kaufmann is not satisfied with this multiplicity of subjects and prefixes them with a lengthy introduction in which he discusses the conception of history in general, its laws and forces, and offers a lengthy criticism of the economic or materialistic interpretation of history. Not everything which is contained in these chapters has a direct bearing on the thesis of the treatise, but a few points help the author towards the analysis of the grave problem which he seeks to solve. He endeavors to prove that while history is subject to determinable laws, yet we must also assume a certain number of data in the occurrence of events which cannot be explained. Furthermore, he contends, that every event in history is the result of an amalgamation of various factors, and that some of these factors are external or accidental, having no necessary inner connection with the event. He emphasizes the fact that human life is dominated by ideas and symbols, and that man is the creator of patterns of culture, all of which facts seem to prove that human history displays the activity of a free will which selects factors and is not subjected to rigid laws. Nor can history be interpreted from the point of view of one phase of human life alone as the materialist interpreters

would have us believe. Besides, he asserts that a broad view of history proves conclusively that economic need was not the principal motive in the creation of the multiple phases of cultures, nor is that need reflected in the content of these phases. The rise of science, of art, of philosophy did not meet any real material need, although once they came into being, they were in part applied to that end. The source of these as well as of many other phases of activity is rather the spiritual power of man which seeks expression in ideas and symbols and acts in numerous ways as a motive force in the manifold of human activities. These preliminary remarks serve the author as a point of departure for his thesis, that it was primarily the spiritual force of the Jewish religion which determined the peculiar fate of the Jewish people in its millennial dispersion and that other forces were only ancillary.

With these preliminaries as a basis, Kaufmann proceeds to delve into the many-faceted problem he sets himself. Inasmuch as the problem is that of a distinct social group with a national character, a proper understanding of the essence of nationhood is necessary, and he begins therefore with a definition of the essence of nationality. He finds that neither the apparent manifestation of a unified group character, nor the seeming likeness of physiognomy of its members, nor the vaunted purity of racial blood are the essentials of nationhood, for these concepts have no real meaning or existence. Nor is the possession of a land a necessary condition for nationhood. What is important is the feeling of genetic brotherhood, namely a common descent, even if it be only an idea rather than an actuality, and next a common language. In itself a common language is not an essential characteristic, but when joined with a feeling of ethnic unity, these two make a nation. The preservation of nationhood, however, poses an entirely different problem. Here possession of a land plays a great role, for it contributes to the creation of a common culture. It is, however, possible for an ethnic group to maintain and preserve its distinction even in dispersion, provided that it occupy a contiguous portion of land wherein its culture and language are dominant, even if the land is politically not its own. These establish its proprietorship and its claim to national rights.

A special function is assigned by Kaufmann to religion as a preservative of the nationality of a group. Since it has a divine source, its influence is far greater than that of other factors. It is not dependent upon the possession of a land, nor even of a language. Consequently, its preservative power in certain cases—such as that of the Jews—will not

be diminished by dispersion.

Using some of the above-mentioned premises, Kaufmann continues to elaborate his main thesis, that it was religion which acted as the main factor in the preservation of the distinctiveness of the Jews as a group in dispersion. Of course, there were some other factors as well, but it is the religion of the Jews which was the primary one. In the establishment of his thesis, he devotes much space to the refutation of other theories which were offered in explanation of this remarkable phenomenon. It was not, he claims, the racial qualities which kept Jews from disappearance, for races can assimilate, and in fact, even large numbers of Jews did assimilate totally at various times and places. Nor was it the external animosity which maintained that distinctness, for that distinctness preceded the hatred. Nor was it, as is maintained by some historians, the economic occupation of the Jews, namely, their inclination to commerce, which conduced to their survival, for history does not bear out this thesis. Jews were not, through a large part of their Exilic history, a commercial people. Nor, says the author, does the theory propounded by Aḥad ha-'Am, that it was a biological urge, the innate national desire or will to live which preserved the Jews, hold its ground against criticism. This desire for national existence, exclaims Kaufmann, is an empty concept. What is real is the concrete, the social, the historical forms of life, and in these the religious element predominated, for even the secular phases of Jewish culture were also dressed in a religious garb. As a proof for the primacy of religion as a preservative force, there can be adduced the fact that those Jews who left Judaism by conversion were entirely lost to their people. He, however, adds that by religion he does not necessarily mean the observance of religious laws, but rather the religious idea itself.

Kaufmann feels that this thesis needs justification and verification, and to this end he proceeds to devote a large part of his work. He first endeavors to prove that Judaism is essentially a universal religion, though he is quite aware of its apparent national character, namely, the covenant between God and the people. He asserts that the national phase is, in fact, of secondary importance. To prove this point, he launches upon a lengthy discussion of the attitude of Judaism towards proselytes. He shows that Judaism always favored proselytes, but, of course, as long as the Jews were in their own land, the proselytes also assimilated ethnically, i.e., they were gradually absorbed in the ethnos of the Jews. But after the loss of the state, proselytizing in dispersion

became almost exclusively a religious matter, and the proselytes were never asked to reject their ethnic affiliation. This essential characteristic of Judaism, namely, its universalism, was the great preservative force in dispersion, for the God of Israel was universal and could preserve His worshippers in any land.

The national phase in the life of the Jews continued to play an important part, but it was not itself the main reason why the Jews remained not only a religious group, but a united ethnic group as well. This distinctness is, according to his view, a result of many historical factors which caused Judaism to remain through the ages the share of the Jews only. This exclusive proprietorship of the religion, however, in turn strengthened the national phase in Judaism. There is no doubt that Kaufmann overemphasizes the universal phase and minimizes the national aspect of Judaism. In fact, he senses it himself, for he poses the problem of why, if Judaism is so essentially universal and was desirous of proselytes, did the nations fail to accept it at the time when paganism was tottering?

In order to solve this problem, Kaufmann launches upon a discussion which occupies several hundred pages and which embraces numerous subjects, of which the salient points are the following: Judaism had begun to gather force with the first dispersion. It is then that the complete religious distinction of the group had become a fact. The reason for such distinction was twofold in nature, first, because the sin of the people against religion was considered the cause of the political disaster, and the second, the hope for the return to their land was conditioned, as the prophets repeatedly asserted, upon repentance expressed in complete devotion to the only God. Hence, there arose a deep negative feeling towards paganism, which in turn brought about a distinctness in the modes of life of the Jewish group from those of all other groups. This distinctness was strengthened during the period of the Second Commonwealth. The return to Palestine under Cyrus was primarily motivated by a religious urge, and not by suffering from oppression in Exile. However, the Messianic hopes were not realized, and it was felt that their fulfillment was delayed until national repentance would be completed. Hence, the display during that period of a feverish activity in the strengthening of religion, the rise of the Oral Law, and the compilation and closing of the Torah. This last act marks a turning point in the history of Jews and Judaism, for the closing of the Torah meant a concentration of the entire religion in the word of

God as revealed in the Torah which is the share of the Jews. The Jews can then live everywhere, for they carry the word of God with them. Individuals of other nations can join the Jewish group and share in the Torah, but the group as a whole remains distinct.

The Jews then went forth into the dispersion, firm in their religion, negating all other faiths and possessed of strong national consciousness which kept the group in ethnic distinction. Yet, these were not the primary reasons why the nations did not accept Judaism while they did accept its daughter religion, Christianity. There were other factors, namely, the dispersion and the tragic destiny of the Jews, on the one hand, and the Messianic hopes, on the other hand. The first caused doubts among the masses of the nations, to whom political strength of a people was evidence of the greatness of its God, as to the truth of Judaism. The second connected the future of Israel with the downfall of the other nations, and these were not ready to change their role in life nor their attitude towards the Jews. In other words, were the nations to accept Judaism, they would have to play the role of a Messiah towards the Jews and exalt them above themselves. Besides, the negation of all paganism by the Jews and their contempt for it engendered a feeling of animosity towards them which did not change even when the nations accepted Christianity.

The situation changed when Paul separated Christianity from the Jewish people. According to Paul, redemption is not for the Jewish people only, but for all men, and furthermore, it contains no political element, but implies mainly a redemption from sin. He further asserted that the term Israel does not denote a distinct group, but is only a symbol. The removal of these two factors, i.e., the tragic destiny of the Jews and the political element in Messianism together with the adoption of some pagan elements, such as designation of Jesus as the son of God and all that the conception involves, brought about the victory of Christianity over paganism.

On the other hand, it is precisely those elements which have their source in paganism which made the rift between Judaism and its daughter religion complete and heightened the separatism of the Jewish group in a number of ways. The Godship of Jesus imputed to him authority, while Judaism recognized only the authority of the Torah. Thus, Christianity by its rejection of the Torah and by designating Jesus as the carrier of a new covenant facilitated its own spread, for many pagans found it difficult to accept all the precepts of Judaism. The result

of these many factors was, that while the monotheism of Judaism conquered paganism, the Jewish group itself became more and more distinct.

The rift between it and its daughter religion also strengthened the national element, for Judaism became more and more the exclusive share of the national group, and its very universality was, through historical circumstances, limited by its national traits. Religion therefore became the main preservative of the Jews in dispersion. Assimilation in certain cultural spheres went on, but not in that of religion. Any change in that meant severance from the group. Kaufmann thus vindicates his thesis.

He proceeds then to show how this combination of the religious and national elements manifested itself in the life of the Jews in dispersion during a 1500 year period which can be characterized by the two words "Exile" and "Ghetto" in their widest meaning. The Jews were not only in dispersion, living in many lands, but also in a ghetto. They were not only separated by their religion, but, as said, by their ethnic distinctness, for the Jews considered themselves a nation, and were so regarded by the other peoples. Hence there arose the peculiar situation of the Jews. On the one hand, exile forced upon them a certain degree of cultural assimilation which prevented them from developing a compact settlement on a portion of land in any place of dispersion in which their culture and language might be dominant. This deprived them from acquiring proprietorship and natural national rights anywhere, even those of a minority. On the other hand, their complete religious life which contained many national elements caused them to be regarded and to regard themselves as strangers. The Jews felt themselves strangers in the lands of dispersion, constantly waiting for redemption; likewise the other peoples regarded them as aliens. It was not always the law which emphasized this strangeness or alienism, but rather the feeling in the hearts of the masses. Out of this mixture of law and emotion, there emerged the ghetto and its peculiar form of life. This life was in a way a substitute for a natural national life, for it contained many elements of a national culture, such as legal autonomy and the retention of Hebrew as a literary language. True, all these were enveloped in a garb of religion, for the sway of religion expressed in the concept of the Torah was complete. Torah was not merely a set of laws and precepts, but rather a pattern embracing all phases of life and culture; hence the ghetto life grew increasingly distinct from the general life

surrounding it. This distinctness was strengthened by the Messianic hope which was stimulated by the oppression from without. This oppression, which had its source in Anti-Semitism, was in turn strengthened by the separation of Jewish from the general life, for Anti-Semitism is after all a complicated phenomenon. Its principal factor may be religious fanaticism, but it also derives strength from other aspects, such as economic competition and a distorted conception of the Jewish character. But beneath all these, there lies the stratum of hatred for a strange national group which persists in its uniqueness. Thus, Jewry for a millennium and a half carried on a double struggle, an internal one, concerned with preserving its religious and national life, and an external one, against all powers and forces threatening its physical existence. Through all this long period, Jewry never gave up its striving for deliverance from the *Galut*, but the striving was completely religious and it was to be realized by supernatural help. This explains why no attempt was ever made to acquire national suzerainty of any part of any land.

Much space is devoted by the author to the delineation of the changes which took place in Jewish life in the modern period, beginning in the middle of the 18th century; in fact, a whole volume is given over to these vicissitudes. The first notable change is the desire on the part of the Jews in the modern period to break down the walls separating life in the ghetto from the general life around it. This desire found its first expression in the Haskalah or enlightenment movement. This movement was caused by the penetration into the ghetto of the new ideas prevalent at the time in the general world, aiming at a liberation of life and culture from the domination of religion. The Haskalah movement was motivated merely by a humanistic tendency which strove to bring new human values into Jewish life, to widen its horizon, and to reconcile Judaism with the spirit of the age. It by no means aimed at abolishing the national distinctiveness and uniqueness of the Jews. Yet its results, directly and indirectly, brought about a weakening of Judaism, for it contributed to an increase of secularism in Jewish life and thus accelerated assimilation. Inevitably the old form of Jewish life which concentrated in and around the Torah began to totter.

The second stage in the process of change was a much graver one. Due to a number of circumstances, the rise of the liberal spirit in general life which encourage the Jews in their efforts for emancipation, on the one hand, and the rise of nationalism among the nations of Europe

which looked askance at the existence of a distinct national and cultural group in their midst, on the other hand, there arose a passionate desire in the hearts of the West-European Jews to be redeemed from a state of exile and alienism. Its main expression was the Reform movement which sought to discard the conception of Jewish nationhood entirely and to identify the Jews as merely a religious community. This was a novel feature in Jewish history, for it sought to provide a basis for participation by Jews in all phases of the cultural and political life of the nations except that of religion. In other words, this represented a striving for the acquisition of a fatherland in various countries, and the result was a tendency to greater and more complete assimilation.

However, this effort failed. It could by no means do away with the national distinction, for, says Kaufmann, as long as Jews maintained Judaism, even in a changed form, the masses of the nations continued to conceive of them as distinct and unique. The national element cannot be detached from Judaism. In fact, even the Reform Jews themselves, by propounding the theory of the special mission of the Jews, reintroduced a national element into their view of Judaism. Consequently, the nations were not mollified by this change and still considered the Jews a distinct national group, especially in view of their claim of unified racial descent. The liberals among them demanded complete assimilation—a blood assimilation—in other words, a disappearance of the Jewish group by conversion and intermarriage. Such things as wholesale conversion or intermarriage are impossible. The particular Jewish situation as a national group dispersed among nations, which is in a position of alienism, or is considered so by the masses in the various countries, remained unchanged, and thus the cause of antagonism and animosity to the Jews was not removed.

Later there arose the national movement in Jewry. This movement gathered strength in Russia, the largest Jewish center in the 19th century, where there was a fuller Jewish life. However, at first there, too, the desire for emancipation was awakened in certain Jewish circles, and some even strove to assimilation, and, for a time, the Socialist movement, in its early stage, held out to the Jewish youth a kind of Messianic hope of redemption from the state of alienism. But all these hopes were shattered. It was then that the proposal for actual acquisition of a fatherland came to the fore and assumed different forms, the most important of which is Zionism.

Kaufmann turns to analyze the history of the national movement

during the last sixty years in its various phases and theories, and then offers his own solution to the grave problem of the Jewish situation. In this movement, says he, we can distinguish two main motives, a desire for redemption from a state of Exile, i.e., the acquisition of a land and the striving to maintain the integrity of Jews and Jewish culture in the lands of dispersion in spite of conditions threatening their disintegration. He claims that the first motive is essentially the most important. However, he points out that in the course of the development of the national idea in its various phases, the second motive gained preponderance, and greatly deplores the fact. In a series of essays he propounds these theories, analyzes them, and shows their untenability. He reviews the spiritual Zionism of Aḥad ha-'Am which aimed at the establishment in Palestine of a cultural center in order to maintain through its influence the integrity of Jewry in the lands of dispersion; the cultural-autonomy theory of Dubnow which hoped to obtain minority rights in various lands and thus save Jewish integrity; the demands of certain rebels, as Berdichewski and others for a secular Judaism which should be in harmony with the modern spirit; and finally, the nationalism of the Yiddishists who based their hopes on the development of the Yiddish language. The common characteristics of all these national tendencies, says our author, is that they assume continued existence of the Jews in Galut and only seek for preservatives. The primary motive, namely, the actual redemption from the Galut by a large migration of Jews to the new land is forgotten, and therefore they are untenable. Aḥad ha-'Am's reliance on Palestine as a center to maintain the Jews in the Diaspora is groundless, since he, like others, wants to secularize Judaism. In line with this theory of the primacy of religion in Jewish history, Kaufmann asserts that it is useless to hope that any secular culture will maintain the Jews in their integrity under present conditions. Aḥad ha-'Am's biological principle of the national will to exist has already been pointed out above to be only an empty concept. And certainly, says Kaufmann, Dubnow's panacea of cultural autonomy is hardly feasible. (*) First, because the proposed cultural autonomy is of secular content and, as stated, secularism will not maintain Jewry in *Galut*. Second, no such autonomy can really be effective unless a minority group lives in a definite section of the land in which its culture and language are dominant, but the Jews are primarily urban

(*) His arguments were advanced in 1936 when there was still a shadow of Jewish minority rights in Poland.

dwellers, scattered in various localities, and no continuous section of any land is occupied by them. The claims of the Yiddishists, says Kaufmann, are almost preposterous, for while language is an important force in the life of a people, it is only one factor, and besides, Yiddish was never dominant in the life of any section of Jews. It suffered severely from the competition of the languages of the nations and its future is far from secure.

He then offers his own solution to the problem of the Jewish situation in the Diaspora. The solution is to a great extent based on deductions from his theories developed in the entire works, and is briefly as follows: The preservative force of Jewry through the ages was religion or Judaism. But since its power, through various circumstances, has weakened, Jewry needs a land in order to continue its existence. That land must contain the majority of the Jews who should migrate thither. Palestine undoubtedly is the proper land, for the Jews have a proprietary right to it. But realist as he is, he does not believe that it can accommodate all or the majority of the Jews, for the Arabs also have a proprietary right. He therefore revives the old territorialistic theory—the need for a new territory for the Jews, a land sparsely settled, which the Jews should be able to colonize and build from the beginning. He does not name the territory, but merely hopes that it will be found when the problem will become an international one. He is aware, though, that such an accomplishment needs an exceptionally strong national will, and in order to arouse it, he proposes to develop in the lands of the Diaspora a national culture based on the Hebrew language which has its roots deep in the entire history of Jews and Judaism. This culture will serve as the means through which the national will will be developed. This culture will be a general human Hebrew culture, for no new religion or new Judaism can rise. He emphasizes that it will only be a means; the real preservative will be the territory where Judaism will flourish anew.

The solution seems fantastic not only in the light of the present world Jewish situation, but even in the light of the situation at the time it was written. But the value of the book does not lie in the solution it offers, but in the presentation of the problem and its thorough analysis, and still more, in the light it sheds upon many phases of Jewish history. As such, *Gole we-Nekar* contributes to a better understanding of the history of our people.

iv. Views similar to those of Kaufmann on the fate and destiny of the

Jews in modern times were expressed by Jacob Klatzkin, the well known philosopher, in his collected essays, *Tehumim* (Boundaries). Judaism, says he, can be comprehended under two aspects. First, as a religion which has evolved a complicated system of laws, precepts, and commandments, and which lays great emphasis on punctilious observance. Secondly, as a religion which contains a number of principles and views leading to a moral view of the world and life. On surveying the efficacy of these two aspects in the long history of the people, we must come to the conclusion that it was the first aspect which contributed pre-eminently to the survival of the group. In fact, even the spiritual and moral aspects have the element of law within them. In contradistinction to other religions of antiquity, Judaism lacked both the elements of imagination, which creates a mythology, and that of speculation which arises from a contemplation of nature and a desire to penetrate its mysteries. Monotheism, which annihilated the power of nature and raised the value of man, emphasized the faculty of will which in turn emphasizes practice.

As a result of these essential traits, Judaism is the only religion which was completely realized in life. Other religions, which consisted primarily of a complex of strivings, hopes, and mere longings for an ideal state, fell short of realization and did not deeply influence the lives of their followers. Christianity affords the best illustration of such failure. In spite of its complicated organization, numerous followers, and apparent strength, it has remained an ideal more than a reality. The obvious proof of this lies in the glaring contradiction between its lofty moral teachings, its claim to be a religion of peace and mercy, and the brutality, injustice, and warlike spirit of so many of its followers. In Judaism, on the other hand, ideals were realized in life and law, and in the punctiliousness of observance of the laws and precepts by every Jew lay its strength. As long as the daily practice of Judaism was prevalent, the Jewish group could withstand all attacks and maintain its national integrity.

The problem of the continuation of the Jewish integrity in the lands of the Diaspora is a product of the modern period in which changed conditions have undermined the completeness of the Jewish religion both on the practical side and also on that of belief, for even practice must be buttressed by strong belief. Several solutions have been offered to the problem. The first was that of the assimilated Jews in Western European countries. These Jews had freed themselves both from the

practice of the laws and precepts and from Jewish nationalism, but nevertheless insisted on maintaining that there is a lofty Jewish spirit which is expressed primarily in a group of moral values. Thereto they added as an ideal the conception of the Jewish mission. Later, the secular nationalists offered another solution, namely, that the national feeling should serve as the staying factor in maintaining the integrity of the group, while the Zionists proposed as such a factor the rehabilitation of Palestine. Finally, the spiritual Zionists, led by Aḥad ha-'Am (above p. 883f.), propounded the spiritual center theory. This theory, as is well known, is a kind of compromise. It accepts the continuation of Exile, but asserts that it needs a center, namely, a land where the spirit of Judaism can develop without hinderance, and from which influence can radiate to the various Jewish settlements in the Diaspora and enable them to maintain their national integrity. This theory sees in religion only one aspect of the manifestation of the Jewish spirit, but not the main one. Like the theorists of assimilation, it lays primary emphasis on the moral ideals of Judaism, especially on the concept of justice.

Klatzkin criticizes severely all of the above solutions except one. Those who want to reject nationalism entirely and rely upon the spirit of Judaism, especially upon its ethical views for maintaining the integrity of the Jews as a religious group, says he, err greatly. These values no longer belong merely to the Jews but rather to the whole of humanity. Making them as the principal staying power will only weaken Jewish integrity and not strengthen it, and certainly will not prevent total assimilation if conditions permit.

Nor does the spiritual center theory fare much better with him. The small settlement in Palestine with its spirit of Judaism will not be able to prevent assimilation in the settlements of the Diaspora. As long as emphasis is placed upon moral and general spiritual values and not upon religious practice, the struggle for integrity will go on. Moreover, ideas and striving which in their ultimate aspect belong not to the group alone but to all men cannot overcome the forces of assimilation which surge upon the Jews in the *Galut* from all sides. Certainly, says he, a national feeling for preservation cannot prevent disintegration. Such feeling did not prevent the disappearance of other nations. What really kept the Jews in the past from disintegration was the complete religious life which also contained national features. With the loss of such a mode of life, the future existence of the Jew in the Diaspora is endangered.

Klatzkin therefore believes that the only solution to the problem is to rebuild Palestine, to settle a large part of the Jewish people therein, and to revive Hebrew as the national language. Klatzkin is thus a secular Zionist. Land and language are to him the main factors or boundaries which determine the nationality of a group; all other factors are merely auxiliary ones. The content of the national genius can change through the ages, but as long as these forms are intact, the nation is secure in its future.

He is aware, however, that land and language as far as the Jews are concerned are not immediately attainable, but that a long time must elapse before they can become real boundaries of Jewish nationality. He therefore proposes an interim cultural and spiritual activity which will strengthen the will of the people for redemption. That activity should utilize all factors of the Jewish tradition, especially that of religion. He claims that in the Diaspora no national Jew ought to free himself from the yoke of laws and precepts, for these supply strength and power to national distinction. In Palestine itself that necessity need not exist.

Much has changed, since the essays were written, in the world in general and Jewish life in particular. The problem, however, still remains and an adequate solution is still wanting. Essays such as those of Klatzkin which throw light upon the search for a solution are, therefore, still of interest.

CHAPTER XII

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG'S STERN DER ERLOSUNG; J. KLATZKIN'S PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY.

i. Writers, scholars, and thinkers can, on the whole, be divided into two classes, those whose works surpass their personality in intensity and depth, and those whose personality outshines their work. It is given only to the few to excel in both. To that select number Franz Rosenzweig belongs. Born into a wealthy family which was permeated with the assimilationist spirit of the social stratum to which it belonged, he was given a rather slight Jewish education, and his acquaintance with Judaism in his youth was limited to an occasional visit to the synagogue. On entering the University he at first studied medicine, but soon turned to philosophy and kindred studies. Before long he became keenly interested in theological problems and in religion in general, and since he moved in a circle of friends who were either converted or about to be converted to Christianity, he was himself ready to embrace that religion. He was about to carry out his resolution, despite the vigorous protests of his mother, when he chanced to spend the Day of Atonement in an orthodox synagogue in Berlin. This day marked a turning point in his life. Not only did he remain a Jew, but, henceforth Judaism, both in its theory and its practice, became the center of his life. He mastered much of Jewish knowledge, became acquainted during his stay in Warsaw in 1918 with the typical Jewish life in Poland, and applied himself with intensity to the development of his religious philosophy and his philosophy of Judaism, which was given to the world in his book, *Der Stern der Erlösung* (The Star of Redemption), published in 1921.

Simultaneously, immediately after his marriage, he threw himself with great ardor into the Jewish educational movement and founded the exemplary Free House of Study at Frankfort which dispensed Jewish knowledge to hundreds of students. By means of his glowing personality and intense activity he was thus able to exert influence upon wide circles of German Jewish youth. This great work did not, however, last long. In 1922 he was stricken with paralysis and was confined to

his bed for eight years. But it was a paralysis only of the body, not of the mind or the spirit. Bearing his suffering with patience and complete faith in God, he carried on his work with the few fingers which were not affected by the disease, and aided by his devoted wife he composed a new German version of the Bible together with Martin Buber, translated Judah ha-Levi's poems into German, and wrote numerous essays and hundreds of letters which contain thoughts and reflections on various problems, aspects, and phases of Judaism and Jewish life. He died on the 10th of December, 1929.

Obviously, Rosenzweig underwent a complete spiritual metamorphosis. The profound shift in attitude towards Judaism and the quality of mysticism which attended it is reflected in his theological views and the conception of Judaism as he elaborates it in his main work *The Star of Redemption*. In consequence, the book defies any attempt to expound it in a systematic and logically connected way. At best, we can only attempt to penetrate, from time to time, into the recesses of Rosenzweig's thought and catch a glimpse of its working, and by the light of these glimpses try to present the gist of his views. The effort is made more difficult by his method of presentation which is encumbered by a host of technical devices and by his excessive use of undefined poetical terms as well as by the general abstruseness of his exposition. Yet, difficult as the task is, it is worth while to undertake it, and present at least the high lights of his views in a popular manner, divested of all technical language, expressions, and devices, so that we may avail ourselves of the warmth and glow of religious intensity which permeate this remarkable book.

Although Rosenzweig was trained in philosophic thought and was a master of all systems of philosophy, ancient and modern, he was essentially a natural theologian. By this we mean one to whom the fundamental principles of theology or religious belief, the existence of God and His relation to the world and man, rest not on rational proof but rather on personal experience. In fact, in a letter to his fiancée he says, "I perceived directly the strokes of God as well as the touch of His gentle hand upon my body," and thereby conveys a sense of his immediate experience of the presence of God in his personal life. (1) It is small wonder, then, that in all his writings Rosenzweig never attempts to offer even a shadow of proof for the existence of God or for His revelation in the world and life, though that revelation is an important

(1) *Briefe*, p. 386.

center of his thought.

He therefore devotes much space to controvert the contemporaneous idealistic philosophy, in the Hegelian and post-Hegelian forms, the philosophy which posits an absolute unified All, continually realizing itself in the world of phenomena and man. This absolute All identified often by the thinkers with thought, in its widest connotation, leaves no room for a God in a religious sense, nor for man in the sense of a being seeking full expression of personality, nor for a created world. Rosenzweig sets himself to refute this view. His starting point is man's fear of death. Were the idealists right, says he, and man really a part of the All, why should death be feared, since the All never dies? But since that fear is so elemental in man, it proves that the individual man has a separate existence from the All and possesses his own nature. Rosenzweig also points to the new tendency in philosophy which began with Schopenhauer who injected into philosophic thought the factors of will and values, a tendency which militates against the idealistic view of the unified All, inasmuch as it considers man a distinct personality, and not merely a manifestation of the Absolute, and breaks up the vaunted unity. Besides, there is really no unity in the cosmos, for even if we say with the idealist philosophers that being is identified with thought, thought itself is not a unity but only a unified sum of many parts; consequently, the cosmos also does not present the real unity which the idealists say it has. As a result of such criticism, the notion of the single All in existence loses its ground, and instead we turn, according to Rosenzweig, to three entities or units conveyed to us both by observation and thought, namely: God, the world, and man. These three entities of which man has been conscious from time immemorial are, of course, related to each other, and Rosenzweig symbolizes them by the lower triangle of the Jewish Mogen David, the six-pointed star.

Considering these entities from an intellectual standpoint—not that of the idealistic philosophy—but one based on three fundamental words of language, “yes,” “no,” and “and,” i.e., affirmation, negation, and relation, we arrive at the following conceptions of them. All that we know of God is that His essence is infinite and that He is free. But the nature of His essence is unknown; hence the conception of His nature is metaphysical.

Of the world we can say that, on the whole, it is a constant flood of phenomena which are infinitely produced, though each act of production is limited and finite. That flood courses from the singular to the

general, inasmuch as the singular phenomena become members of a species, and these of genera, and further of classes. They then become individuals, insofar as they participate in the general and also possess particularity. This process is enforced by the principle of order which Rosenzweig calls the *logos* or world soul. The world, however, is meta-logical, i.e., thought and order are essential elements in the process, but are not its essence and law.

Of man we also know little. We know that he is, but his being is primarily particular. He differs from God in being, for he is perishable, and differs, too, from the world, for he is not integrated in the general, as are the world phenomena, but always remains a self, a complete whole. In general life, it is true, he is an individual, inasmuch as he comes into relation with others of his genus and thus acquires a personality which is a characterization of his particularity as compared with others and as differing from others, but in his inner character he is a distinct self. It is for this reason that man, in the Biblical story related in Genesis, is the only creature which is given a name, thereby conferring upon him special distinction and particularity. The self strives toward immortality, and in the course of history the striving was expressed in various ways. The uniqueness of the self makes man meta-ethical, i.e., behind ethics, so that while ethics may be the premises of his actions, they are not his sole law and essence.

The questions then arise as to the relation between these three entities and as to how that relation should be conceived. These questions, of course, have been pondered upon by man for many ages. In the ancient world they were not adequately answered and the relation of the three remained undetermined. God, as conceived, was apart from the world, hardly taking part in its affairs, possessed only of a casual non-continuous interest in man, and man's interest in God was similarly casual and sporadic. It is only in the post-ancient period that these questions were given a more adequate answer under the influence of Judaism, although it was necessary to introduce the element of the miraculous by positing the concepts of creation and revelation. However, says Rosenzweig, the miraculous character of that answer should by no means militate against its truth, for a miracle does not contradict the stability of nature. On the contrary, it affirms it, inasmuch as it is an exception to the rule, for otherwise it would be no miracle. Besides, the real character of a miracle is its prophetic quality, for it is a sign of a relation which is to be fulfilled and points toward the future. In

general, he points out, nobody has ever proved the impossibility of miracles; they have merely injected doubts of their occurrence. With these remarks designed as a preface to obviate objections to his view from the followers of the scientific outlook upon the world, life, and God, he then proceeds to elaborate his conception of the relation among the three entities.

The first step in this relation is creation. God created the world, and through it He Himself became visible, emerged, so to say, from His isolation, and became revealed. In fact, creation is the first stage of revelation. This creation is an act of divine freedom, yet not entirely arbitrary, for it is realized according to the nature of God and therefore implies a certain amount of necessity. Rosenzweig, in propounding his view of creation, rejects various attempts to explain this remarkable act as emanation or the gradual realization and particularization of the absolute. He means real creation. Yet he is not really clear on the matter of the beginning. He speaks of a creation from nothing, but that nothing is only the state of indefiniteness of the world before it was revealed as a created world, or in other words, before it emerged from the general state of being into a flood of particulars which are again integrated into general entities of species, genera, etc.

The central point in Rosenzweig's concept of creation is that it is a process, for things are constantly being renewed. In this way, creation really becomes providence which, he claims, is continuous and immediate. However, this immediateness refers only to the general order of the world, but the providence extended to particular things is only mediate, i.e., through a series of factors. In this he seems to follow Maimonides. It is in this process of attention to the preservation of the world by regulating its order and keeping its stability that the constant relation of God to the world is expressed. As for man, he was destined for a somewhat different type of relation—that of revelation. At the very beginning, at creation itself, he had already received distinction. We are told in the Book of Genesis that all other beings were created by a command stated in the third person, e.g., "And God said," while in the creation of man, it is said, "Let us make a man." In that *us* an "I" and a "thou" are included. It is true that the plural of the verb may only mean a pluralis majestatis, but it already points to the future revelation in which the divine "I" and the human "thou" come into relation.

The essence of this revelation of God is His love for man. This love

is manifested each moment of existence, and consequently, it is always found in the present, but it also contains the past within it, inasmuch as it increases in intensity with the passage of time. Since God is the lover, He chooses and selects the object of His love in accordance with the actions and strivings of men, and thus His love is not irrevocably bestowed for all time. Consequently, man must be prepared for the love of God. He must be proud of his relation to God, but this pride must be neither one of boldness nor of arrogance, but should rather be tempered by humbleness and a sense of dependence and awe. It is pride merely because man is conscious of the grace of God. Such a combination of humbleness and of pride is the proper preparation of the soul, the beloved of God, for that love. This love of God which is the essence of revelation manifests itself continually and is always present, and did not come to an end with the historic revelation at Sinai. That historical revelation is indeed a guarantee of the continuation of God's love in the present. Through this mutual love both God and man gain in reality. When He revealed Himself and spoke, as in the Ten Commandments, "I command thee," the "I" of the Godhead became more visible, for it spoke to a *thou* who perceived Him and became conscious of His love. Man, likewise, developed at that point because he was permeated by that love and thenceforth prayed for its continuation. This prayer and man's awareness of sin and his confession of it after it is committed are the outward expressions of man's love for God.

The next problem for Rosenzweig is to define a way of life for man which in daily action would realize the striving of the soul for the love of God, and thus raise man himself and the world to the high plane which Judaism and its daughter religions have called the reign of the Kingdom of God. Rosenzweig calls it redemption a term which is not wholly Jewish. He seeks it, not in the life of the saint who devotes himself wholly to God and neglects the world and man, but rather in the life of the ordinary man. Man should express his love for God through his love of fellow man. Morality should be regarded not as a matter of obedience nor as a means of obtaining certain ends, but wholly a matter of love. The commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is explained by Rosenzweig as containing two essential points which are often overlooked. The first is that the term *Rea* which means friend or neighbor is not exclusive but all-inclusive. The *Rea* is only a representative of the whole human genus. In other words, he is the nearest at the moment, but all others are also near in

successive moments. The second is embodied in the words, "like thyself" (Komokho), namely, that the fellow man must be considered a distinct personality like one's own.

It is by means of a way of life which actualizes the love for God coupled with a recognition of the goodness of God that redemption can be attained, and redemption to Rosenzweig means no less than the perfection of human life. This perfection, or the Kingdom of God, is not a static state but a continuous striving for higher states of life. Hence redemption is real life which endures or possesses eternity. It differs from progress for the latter has a row of set stages with set purposes, but the Kingdom of God can only be anticipated and cannot be predetermined. It is primarily social rather than individual, for not one man but all men must be redeemed. In general, we find in our lives the incipient stages of redemption, those in which man unites with others in love and loyalty, like marriage and the family, but the moment of realization of the highest stage, when this unity will be completed, is known only to God. For man that moment remains only an ideal which finds expression in deep religious sentiment, as in the Psalms where we find such phrases as "Come, let us sing," which indicate the realization that the *I* ought to become a *we*.

This striving for redemption and the Kingdom of God is, according to Rosenzweig, primarily the share of the Jewish people. It is only through Judaism that such striving was injected into the life of other peoples by the agency of its daughter religions, especially Christianity. In fact, it is only the Jews alone who have already attained eternity, for Rosenzweig holds that the statement repeated by them in one of the prayers, "Thou hast given us eternal life" is no vain boast. Their common national bond resides not in being rooted in the soil of a certain land as other nations are, but in the blood, in the racial unity. They are in no fear of conquest for they are everywhere. Exile or sojourn in other lands is an integral part of their lives. Indeed the history of Exile begins with Abraham, the founder of the nation. True, the former land plays a great part in Jewish life history but that land is a holy land, a land which is longed for, but it is not the condition of Jewish existence.

The will of this people is expressed entirely through its continued life as an entity, held together by unity of blood. Its national bond is, therefore, a bond of life, and not like that of other nations, of soil, which is a dead thing. Similarly, the Jews have made Hebrew a language

of prayer and spirituality. They have thus raised it above time, for though people in their daily life speak in the language of the nation in the midst of which they dwell, Hebrew is still with them and remains with them. The Jews, moreover, unlike other nations, are not subjected to laws which change with altered conditions, but rather possess an eternal law which is supposed to be unchangeable. Even the Jewish reckoning of time is not based upon important events in Jewish history, but begins with the creation of the world, for the past events are not really past, but are still present to the Jew. As we say in the Passover Haggadah, every Jew is obliged to consider himself one of those who were redeemed from Egypt by the Exodus. It is the eternity of the Jewish tradition which imparts strength to the people and endows it with eternal life, though it lives in present time. The three phases of relation, i.e., creation, revelation, and redemption are symbolized, according to Rosenzweig, by the upper triangle of the Mogen David.

The essence of the strength is embodied in the spiritualized year in which process the Sabbath and the festivals play the main role. The Sabbath is connected with creation, and inasmuch as the Sabbath continually recurs, it symbolizes the constant renewing of creation. The Sabbath also reminds the Jew of revelation, for it was at Sinai that the Sabbath was commanded. The Sabbath is a day of rest for the body but of activity for the spirit. The Sabbath prayers omit eleven references to material things which are asked for in the week-day Amidah (2); they plead only for forgiveness of sin and redemption. The Sabbath thus reflects the three lines of relation between God, world and man, namely, creation, revelation, and redemption.

Similarly, the great holidays reflect this relationship. Passover is related to creation, inasmuch as it commemorates the creation of a people; Shebuot is a festival of revelation; and Succot symbolizes the desire for redemption, for the Succah is regarded only as a temporary dwelling, a temporary substitute for a permanent place of rest.

The crown of spirituality in life is represented by the High Holy Days. In them religiosity is expressed in the highest stage. In them the religiosity of the community and the individual are united. They are days of judgment of the individual, yet the formula of confession of sin is always in the plural, "We have sinned" thus indicating that sin is a human rather than an individual failing. New Year and the Day of Atonement, especially the latter, are entirely permeated with the

(2) *Amidah* is another name for the prayer otherwise known as the Eighteen Benedictions.

spirit of divine love, with trust in God, and with aspiration to the Kingdom of God. It is this spiritualized year which is the core of the Jewish power of survival, for the year constantly recurs and forms an endless cycle. This cycle is in time, but the life of the people itself is eternal.

Rosenzweig admits that Christianity also acknowledges the three elements of real religion, creation, revelation and redemption—revelation being embodied in the appearance of the personality of Jesus. He also concedes that Christianity as well as Judaism saved the world from paganism. But he finds an essential difference between the two. The Jew and Judaism were born together, while Christianity was superimposed upon pagan peoples. As a result, there is always a dualism in the life of the Christian nations, a conflict between their own culture and the religious ideals of Christianity. This conflict in turn gives rise to many other dualisms, such as State and Church, right and might, for in the life of these nations force plays a great role and force sanctions new rights. Besides, Rosenzweig contends, there is no real unity in Christianity. For Judaism, in spite of the fact that it invests God with certain contradictory attributes, such as judgment and love of God, is really one. But Christianity is divided between the father and the son. In Judaism there is no need for a mediator between man and God, while in Christianity man requires the mediation of the son. The Jews are a people all united, while the other nations are united in Christianity through the Church which, as its original word "Ecclesia" signifies, is only a meeting of individuals in which men agree but remain individuals. Christianity, it is true, strives for eternity, but it is forever merely on its way, while Judaism has already reached eternity. In reality, Judaism represents the fire of religiosity, while Christianity is a reflection of the rays of that fire. Rosenzweig does not deny that there is some truth in that reflection for it partially mirrors the truth which is contained in the fire itself, namely, Judaism, but as a reflection it assumes a different aspect and it contains imperfection on account of its dualism. In fact, even Judaism itself does not contain the whole truth, for wholeness belongs only to God. Man can only share in it in different degrees. The existence of the Jews is a constant reminder to the Christian nations of the imperfection inherent in Christianity, and this, Rosenzweig says, constitutes the source of animosity towards the Jews which probably will not cease until the day of complete redemption of the world, the day of the Messiah.

There is no doubt that in the light of the present Jewish situation in particular, and of the spiritual tempo of the world in general, some of the theories of Rosenzweig regarding the fate, destiny, and nature of the Jewish people appear to be, to put it mildly, extremely naive. To glorify the Jewish lack of a land and to proclaim it as the eternal destiny of Israel, as well as to relegate both Palestine and the Hebrew language to the realm of holiness and thus deprive them of exerting any real influence upon daily life is not in accord with the actual conditions of Jewish life today, and was contradictory to the situation even in Rosenzweig's time. It is true that in his last years Rosenzweig compromised, in a way, with the Zionist movement and began to appreciate its importance for the regeneration of the Jewish spirit. But he always emphasized that he was a non-Zionist and spoke of the movement in a condescending tone as of something which must be tolerated under modern conditions, but which he guarded against because of its secularism.

Nor can we overlook the narrowness of his scheme which compressed the complex of Judaism and the manifold of Jewish history into a triangular formula, composed of a few emotions and beliefs. For in spite of the intensity and depth with which he invests these beliefs they are not clarified nor is their efficacy in life determined. Yet notwithstanding these shortcomings and despite the nebulousness of his theology, the glow of religious emotion permeating his work, the emphasis laid upon the love of God for man and the love of man for man as the purest expression of religion, as well as Rosenzweig's attempt to make the fundamentals of Judaism a basis for a general view of the world and life, make his book one of the truly important contributions to Jewish philosophical and theological literature.

ii. An exceptionally valuable work which will be of great help to every student of Mediaeval Jewish philosophy is Jacob Klatzkin's *Oẓar ha-Munahim ha-Pilisufim* (Thesaurus of Philosophical Terms) in four volumes. In fact, despite its title, it is not limited merely to philosophical terms, but also includes mathematical, physical, and astronomical terms which were employed in the philosophical and scientific literature of the Middle Ages. Its importance, however, lies not so much in the number and variety of the terms which are listed as in the quality of the elucidation of the various meanings and nuances which each term expresses or was made to express by thinkers through the ages. In addition, the explanation of each nuance and usage is supported by

numerous and extensive quotations from the entire philosophic and scientific Hebrew literature.

Those quotations not only clarify the manifold of meanings and usages of the terms, but frequently throw light on the development of philosophic concepts and their influence on the history of Jewish thought. As a result, some of the articles are really miniature philosophic monographs. The article on the term *Seḳel* (intellect, reason) can serve as a typical example of the method of the author. He discerns in it the following usages and meanings: (1) understanding and power of conception; (2) thought in general and also the spirit of man; (3) the universal intelligence which, according to Gabirol, is one of the emanations from God; (4) a spiritual being signifying especially the intelligences which in Arabic and Jewish philosophy represent the souls of the spheres. The quotations under each head present the complex of ideas which entered into each connotation in the course of time. Thus, under the first head, we really have a resumé of the psychology of the period, inasmuch as the different types of reason, the potential, acquired, and active, are defined, and the relation of the faculties of the soul to the objects conceived are explained. Under the fourth head, the whole theory of the spheres and their intelligences which played such an important part in Mediaeval times is briefly stated. Special emphasis is laid on the conception of the Universal Active Intellect, the tenth of the separate intelligences whose function is to preserve the order in the sublunar world or the earth. This article alone occupies thirteen pages. We can therefore say that Klatzkin's Thesaurus is more than a dictionary of philosophic terms and is in fact almost an encyclopaedia of Mediaeval Jewish philosophy. As such it is of great value directly to the student of that subject and indirectly also to scholars who are interested in the period of the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER XIV

NOVELS OF J. GLADSTEIN AND A. ZEITLIN

i. Yiddish literature in this country has received a great impetus and has developed considerably during the last two decades. Many younger writers, besides those discussed by us in the text proper, have made their appearance and contributed their share to the growth of that literature. A particularly outstanding contribution has been made by Jacob Gladstein whose forte is the novel, although he also has to his credit two small collections of poems.

His two novels, entitled *Wen Yash is Geforen* and *Wen Yash is Gekumen* (When Yash—diminutive for Jacob—Traveled, and When Yash Arrived) display great skill in narration and a penetrating psychological insight into human character. These books, however, are not so much novels as a series of portraits of characters and episodes set in a framework which permits them to be displayed.

In the first book the literary device used as the framework is the boat trip made by Yash on his visit to his native city of Lublin. A few pages of reflection on the changes produced in the human character by life on a boat where people who are diverse in type, position, and station in life are thrown together, are given as an introduction to the gallery of portraits drawn by the author. Here, in this forced isolation, says Gladstein, man becomes aware not only of his own personality but also of the value of his fellow travelers, and a need for companionship arises. To satisfy that need, barriers between people are lowered and distance shrinks, so that man is revealed to his neighbors in his natural colors.

There follows then a number of portraits of types. They are various:—a teacher of geography in a high school in Buffalo on a visit to Denmark, his birth place; Russian students who are returning from the United States whither they were sent by the Soviet Government for a period of study; an American financier of French origin; an English pianist; a spinster school teacher from Wisconsin, and an American school principal. Then there follow Jewish types—a Jewish pugilist; a Dutch Jew;

a Bessarabian Jew who had migrated to Bogota, capital of Colombia, South America; an American Jewess hailing from Latvia; a Jewish physician; a dentist, and a former Hebrew teacher on his way to Palestine. All these diverse characters are portrayed by the author through snatches of conversation and a series of episodes. We find here a conglomeration of views and opinions. Midwestern isolationism, socialism, communism and liberalism, all have their vociferous representatives. Bits of Jewish life flit before us in various colors and hues. The Bessarabian Jew from Bogota draws a picture of the drab and lonely life of the few hundred Jews in that city in the Andes; the Dutch Jew parades his patriotism and bewails the advance of Zionism among his Jewish countrymen; the Jewish pugilist, proud of his physical strength, finds it necessary to express his Jewishness by a few Yiddish curses; and even a Soviet engineer who hides his Jewish descent ultimately reveals his past and talks with enthusiasm of the new order which has enabled him, the son of an old-type Hebrew teacher (Melamed), to emerge from poverty and receive an education. These heterogeneous bits of life and thought are joined together by the skillful hand of the narrator into a fine mosaic which charms us both with its colorfulness and its penetrating psychological observations.

The value of the book is enhanced by a number of digressions containing childhood memories, descriptions of revolutionary activities of the Jewish youth in Lublin during the early years of this century, and reminiscences of the author's departure from Poland and his journey to the United States. These digressions are skillfully entwined in the general narrative and possess a value of their own, for the life they depict is well portrayed and offers a glimpse into the soul of Jewish youth in Poland in the first decade of this century.

The second book is likewise a series of portraits of Polish Jewish life in the years before World War II. Here, too, a unifying device is used. The characters are guests at a hotel in a summer resort in Poland where Jews come for a rest and for a cure from various diseases. The author, who is spending a few weeks in the hotel, draws the portraits with the assistance of the principal character, Steinman, a wealthy old man, learned in both Jewish and secular studies, who amuses himself by writing Hassidic stories in Yiddish newspapers. He has traveled much, seen much, and is conversant with Jewish life in and out of Poland in all its phases. He knows, of course, the biography and affairs of every one of the guests who, collectively represent a cross section of Polish

Jewry, extending from members of the families of Hassidic rabbis to followers of the socialistic Jewish Bund. It is with the help of this Steinman, as Cicerone, that Gladstein draws the mosaic of Polish Jewish life and its many classes in the period before it was engulfed by destruction. Here, too, as in the first book, the author digresses to include memories of his life in Poland and of his experiences in the early years of his sojourn in New York, and thereby enlivens the narrative and enhances the value of the book as a work of art.

Gladstein's poetic works are, on the whole, inferior to his novels. Like all Yiddish poets he sings of love and of life with its few joys and many sorrows. The tone is partly realistic—often too realistic—and partly nebulous and semi-mystical. When he excels, it is in the semi-narrative poems which succeed in giving a richer meaning to everyday events. His primary strength, however, lies in his national poems written under the impress of the great catastrophe which overtook European Jewry. These have been collected in a book called *Stralende Yidden* (Shining Jews). In these poems he gives expression to his anguish and heartache at the loss of his dearest and nearest, the Jewry of Poland. The note of hope is absent from the work for the unfathomable disaster fills his heart and his muse is entirely enveloped in black. He asks that the dead be enshrined in undying memory and often protests bitterly against the God of Israel who has selected His people for such a fate. His protests, though they are vehement, often strike a dissonant note because of his irreverence towards the Godhead. Such a poem as *Mein Wogel Bruder* (My Brother in Wandering) offers a prime example of this failing. Where, however, Gladstein strikes the note of sorrow and pathos he is truly moving and compelling.

ii. Another noteworthy contribution to Yiddish literature has been made by Aaron Zeitlin with his drama, *Yakob Frank*, and his novel, *Brenendige Erd* (The Burning Soil). The first dramatizes the Messianic activity of Jacob Frank who, in the first half of the 18th century, declared himself the Messiah and succeeded in obtaining a following among the Jews of the province of Podolia in southern Poland. This movement was characterized by a moral laxity among its followers which Frank justified by citing and juggling certain Kabbalistic phrases and statements.

Zeitlin seeks to picture a well-meaning Frank who approved of moral laxity only because he felt it was a means of hastening the redemption from Exile. He portrays Frank as basing himself on the statement in

the Talmud that the Messiah will come either in a generation wholly just and pious, or in one entirely wicked. (*) Frank therefore endeavored to increase wickedness and thus force God to redeem His people rather than let it become morally rotten and so perish through its own conduct. It is this motive which runs through the entire drama, especially in the monologues and dialogues which form the larger part of it, for on the whole, it contains little action on the part of the leading *dramatis personae*. Besides, the picture of Frank himself there is a characterization of his daughter Eva who played an important part in the history of the movement.

The novel portrays the heroic deeds of a group of Jewish patriots during the First World War. The group, which called itself *Nily* (abbreviation for *Nezah Yisrael Lo Yeshaker*, i.e., The Glory of Israel Will Not Lie, Samuel XV, 29), consisted of Palestinian born young men and women, whose leaders were Aaron and Sarah Aronson, brother and sister (called Gabriel and Sarah Abramson in the story). Aaron, a botanist by profession and the discoverer of wild wheat, foresaw, as a result of the entry of Turkey into the War on the side of Germany, the ultimate conquest of Palestine by Britain. Together with his friends he undertook to help the British with the expectation that they would magnanimously turn Palestine over to the Jews. It was a daring and dangerous undertaking, for the hand of Jemal Pasha, commander-in-chief of the Palestinian front, rested heavily upon the land. Yet, the group of young idealists braved all dangers and swept by the vision placed before them by Aaron, offered their lives for the sake of their people. Some were killed by the bullets of Bedouins, and some were captured by the Turks, tortured and executed, among them young Sarah Aronson. Aaron escaped the fate of his comrades, but was later killed in an aeroplane crash. Zeitlin throws around this group the halo of romance, and weaves a tale of heroism, idealism, and devotion to a great cause, intermingled with love, jealousy, and personal ambition. The tale is told with sympathy and skill, and at times with poetic fervor. The deeds and doers were heroic indeed and worthy of being remembered. It is fortunate indeed that they were recorded and portrayed in so attractive and impressive a manner.

(*) Talmud Babli Sanhedrin, p. 97.

CHAPTER XV

STORIES, POEMS, AND ESSAYS OF A. H. FRIEDLAND AND I. SILBERSCHLAG

i. A. H. Friedland, a noted American Hebrew educator whose educational work during his short life left a lasting impression upon the American Jewish scene, also distinguished himself both as a short story writer and poet.

His stories are, on the whole, built about single episodes in the life of his characters and give considerable expression to the many aspects of American Jewish life. In his collection entitled *Sippurim* (Stories), published posthumously (1946), we find a number of stories which ably depict the minor tragedies in the lives of immigrants who came to this country at an advanced age and could not adapt themselves to circumstances. Thus, in one of his stories, *Mesodo shel Rabbi Melech* (The Establishment of Rabbi Melech), he sketches with skill and sympathy the life of a group of older men employed in the establishment of Melech, a wholesale rags dealer. Together they represent a small society transplanted from the old world to the new. Melech being a kindly and perceptive man recognizes the fact and enables them to stay together as a group and to continue their own pattern of life by assigning to them the easy task of unraveling the stitches of old sacks. Their life, on the whole, flows quietly in its narrow channel until old Tanhum, the moving spirit of the group, who is also the cantor, singer, and violin player is retired upon the marriage of his granddaughter to the son of the owner. It is then that a feeling of forlornness and sorrow overtakes the group and Tanhum himself. Friedland has ably pictured the sense of disintegration and loneliness felt by an aged group who see the beginning of the end of their small world.

In another story we get a glimpse into the soul of a writer of scrolls animated by two overwhelming passions, a pride in his artistic work and a strong love for animals. In the new land, though, he is forced for a time to become the manager of a small restaurant in a clothing shop. The dirt and the gross manners of the working men depress his spirit

and he longs for the old environment. Ultimately, when his wife dies and his children are married, he returns to his old profession which he plies in a lonely room in a large tenement house. A small kitten is his only companion, and he plays with it at intervals. At one time, though, he is caught at this childish play by a committee headed by an old Rabbi who came to order a scroll. He is much embarrassed and henceforth he is careful and locks the door of his room when he feels like playing with the kitten. (*Sofer Setam Banekhor*). Similar small tragedies and bits of life are portrayed in other stories.

Again, the somewhat comi-tragic phases of Jewish public life are projected in a few stories. In one of them Friedland caricatures the zeal of charitable organizations for seeking the advice of "scientific experts." He tells of the invitation extended by a charity federation to a well known expert who is the head of a social work bureau. The expert arrives but acts strangely and overwhelms the committee with his statistics. It develops that the speaker was not really the head of the bureau but his unknown aid who was the real expert whose excessive concentration on statistics and graphs had driven him insane. (*Beribobot Am*). The same theme is reflected in the story *Mumhe minh ha Hux* (An Expert from Afar) which tells of an expert on education who is invited to conduct a survey of a Hebrew school in a Jewish community. The principal, upon meeting this new type of educator, recognizes in him a former pupil whose record was rather poor. He is both confused and fearful of the educator's judgment of his fitness for the position. The anxiety of the principal, the disregard of the educator for him, and his expertness in matters of sport which pleases the children of the directors are well portrayed. The entry of the woman teacher into the Hebrew school also finds place in a short sketch in which we note the astonishment of the leaders of an old type Talmud Torah at the appearance of a young woman who comes to substitute for her father, the sick Melamed. Their astonishment is increased when she manages the class in a more dextrous manner than her father. (*Memalet Makom*).

A number of stories deal with the perennial topic of love and its mishaps, including the eternal triangle. In these stories too, the writer reveals a faculty for portraying typical human situations. In one case it is the problem faced by a young Reform Rabbi which finds an unusual solution. For years he has been greatly attracted to an intellectual young woman of his congregation who presents a great contrast

to his wife. Gradually the attraction ripened into love. The telephone call informing him of her death not only dazes him and shakes his whole being to the foundation, but confronts him with a grave problem. He had written her a number of letters which she had dearly treasured. These letters would not only reveal the duplicity in his life but would also reflect upon the character of the deceased so dear to him. In his despair he thinks of suicide or of revealing to all, to his wife, to the family of the woman, his great love for her despite the consequences to his reputation. But suddenly, the relatives of the deceased appear, and tell him of her request that a box of letters she has sealed be buried with her, and they ask the Rabbi whether such things are permissible. He gives his consent but his wound is deepened as he reflects that she has kept her vow not to separate from him even in death. Another story portrays the feelings of a young girl who instinctively senses that the relation between her father and mother are not what they should be. Her efforts to mend the breach and her partial success are keenly pictured.

Several stories deal with episodes of Eastern European Jewish life. The story entitled *Ahoti Kalah* (My Sister the Bride) is one of the best of the group. The arrival of his older sister from Europe recalls a host of memories to the mind of the writer. As he looks at her in her faded dress he remembers the time when she became the bride of a young Talmudic scholar who was a prodigy (*Ilui*). With great love and pathos he describes the life in the town, his parental home, the blooming beauty of his sister, the manliness of the groom and the impression he made upon the town with his scholarship and oratory. And now he sees before him an elderly woman, bent, gray, and with tearing eyes. The contrast between the mental picture and the real one is movingly and pensively set forth.

Friedland's stories do not lay claim to psychological profundity, nor do they seek to solve problems. Their value lies in the fact that they ably picture fragments of Jewish life in this country, and frequently afford us a glimpse into the souls and the feelings of varied characters.

As a poet, Friedland has proved himself a master of several poetic forms—the narrative, the lyric, and the sonnet. There is one fundamental trait to his verse. It catches the permanent in the passing event, the general in the single phenomenon, the underlying tragic element in life in the ordinary every day affair. Very little escapes his notice and every small event or passing mood serves him as a motive for a poem.

Thus his narrative *Beterem Boḳer* (Before Dawn) pictures the morning trip through the alleys of a rags peddler as he searches through the alleys and ash cans for rags or broken bottles. It is a very prosaic subject indeed, but through it the poet projects the tragic aspect of the general human task of making a living. The portrait of this peddler destined for something better is drawn in a touching manner. In another poem, a sonnet (Ktefaim) a pair of shoulders serve as a motive. The shoulders of the man whose face he does not see tells the poet the story of his life. In their drooping and bent form he reads the tale of disappointments and of the great burden he has carried through life.

Some of his lyric poems which, on the whole, are short similarly reflect an intense emotional reaction or a glimmering thought in response to a prosaic situation. Thus, the sight of a horse trudging wearily up a steep mountain path, dragging behind him a heavily loaded wagon, arouses the poet to pen a poem which conveys a sense of the tribulations of this dumb animal. (Sus). Similarly, in the rustle of the leaves at night Friedland hears their answer to the tree which asks the reason for their restlessness. It is, they say, the shortness of their life. Many springs and summers await the tree, but they have only one, and even at their bloom they already feel the breath of the cold autumn wind which will bring their end. In his love poems he likewise describes certain moments with a distinct charm. The glow worms at night which glitter while in movement and are dark while at rest remind him of the manner in which his heart too lights up with hope and joy in the presence of his beloved, and is overwhelmed by darkness and despair when she is absent. A number of poems, both lyrics and sonnets, are delightful miniature portraits of single events. Such a poem is *Perah ha-Hai* (The Living Flower) which depicts children dancing in the school yard in the bright sunlight. The golden rays of the sun, the laughter of the children and their joy unite in a harmony of light and sound which gladdens the heart. An idyllic and nostalgic picture is offered in *Shabat ba-Zaharaim* (A Summer Sabbath Afternoon) in which the bard portrays the charm of the Sabbath in his early youth. On the whole, Friedland wrote but few nature poems. Of the few, the one entitled *Shlishiah* (Triad) possesses great beauty. A clump of flowers in the garden and the sun setting in the west, in a riot of color and flame, and the reflection of both in the lake make up the Triad. Soon night comes and all three disappear. A tragic note which is very moving is felt in a group of poems written in the shadow of death when the

poet knew that his days were numbered. He does not wail, nor cry, nor weep, but quietly expresses his sorrow at the fleeting days, and tells us of his joy in every moment and of his love for every human face. He even sings of the beauty of death, of its quietude and rest. This resignation and submission to fate is touching and strikes an echo in the heart of every reader.

ii. Another American poet and essayist who deserves mention is Eisig Silberschlag. He has written numerous original poems which are collected in several works and also has translated many poems from the Greek and German, including the drama *Berenika* by Carl de Has.

His original poems are stamped with the impress of individuality, and he appropriately called his first modest collection of poems (pub. 1936) *be-Shebilim Bodidim* (On Isolated Paths). The isolation is expressed in the fact that the poet sings mostly of himself, of his relation to the standard subjects of poetry—love, life, and nature. Love and nature are the recurrent and dominating themes in his work. There are two distinct motives in his love poems, love as such while it lasts, and single moments of love, either as they are experienced in the present or as they are viewed through the haze of memory. In the first group the poet glorifies the glow of love, the irresistible desire of two young souls and bodies for each other. Love is a cosmos in itself, containing everything—beauty, joy and song—and nothing can diminish its rapture, and even nature, dressed in its ungainly fall garb, cannot lessen its glow. (*Shiré Naara*). On the whole, these poems are distinguished by a lightness and joy of spirit.

In the second group of poems, which are short in form, Silberschlag, in spite of his great economy of rhyme and line, at times reaches great poetic heights. Felicitous expressions and exquisite similes are employed to clothe deep thought and stirring feelings. Most impressive of all are the songs which tell of love as a memory which is frequently touched with a note of sorrow. Silberschlag is particularly apt in his choice of similes and metaphors, and in some of them we can discern the influence of the great Hebrew poets of the Spanish Golden Age. In one of the poems he says to his beloved "Were I to weave a carpet of the moments of happiness which we have spent together, and spread it on the expanse of the sky, then even the palest star would shine as bright as the sun. Were I to weave a carpet of the moments of sorrow which we have passed through together and spread it on the expanse of heaven, then it would darken the moon and stars." The contradictory moods in the

love of the young are well illustrated in these original similes which attract us by their exaggeration.

Silberschlag employs a similar economy of line in his nature poems which usually delineate a single impression. There is no lengthy description, no multitude of colors, but rather a dab here and there, so that a symbolic picture is drawn of outstanding traits which conveys the whole. (*Hirhuré Staw; Ezim; Shir Eres*).

Often Silberschlag's poems are shot through with a sorrowful note bewailing the fleetingness of life or the difficulty of attaining happiness. Such thoughts come to the poet as he observes the falling leaves, the swift passing of the waves, or the beauty and fragrance of the lilac which disappear so early. These thoughts, which move the poet to restlessness, to a striving for freedom, to regret for the swift flight of happy youth, to a sense of the oppressiveness and the monotony of life, are the themes of a number of brief, reflective poems. In these, thought blends with poetic expression. The eight-line poem *Shené Neshorim* (Two Eagles), can serve as an illustration. In the first stanza the proud eagle flies majestically through the air to the nest on the mountain top for rest. In the second, another proud eagle, the poet, flies through the expanses of imagination but finds neither rest nor nest.

Of his longer poems, *Judah ha-Levi* is especially noteworthy. It is an exquisite portrait of the famous bard and of his great love for the distant land of Palestine. It is written in the form of an autobiography in song encircled by a halo of love both physical and spiritual and consists of a number of parts. The first delineates the sprouting and flowering of ha-Levi's delicate soul, its response to the world and its mysteries, its glimpse into itself and into the eternity of the spirit. The second part portrays in fine colors ha-Levi's youthful love which was destined to be cut short. Its seed, however, took root in his heart and out of it there sprouted forth that great love of Israel and Palestine which culminated in the irresistible desire to visit the beloved land. Several parts are devoted to the parting of ha-Levi from Spain, from his daughter, from his beloved pupils, and from his grandchild, Judah. They depict in beautiful verses the struggle in the heart of the aged poet between the sorrow of parting and the love of Palestine which finally conquers him. The beauty of the poem is greatly enhanced by a careful culling of phrases from ha-Levi's own poems which are skillfully and harmoniously blended with Silberschlag's own verses.

At times Silberschlag endows his nature poems with an allegorical

touch of wider significance. Thus, in his fine poem *Naddim Naddim ha-Olim* (The Leaves Wander) the continual tossing and whirling of the leaves by the wind is employed by him to symbolize the fate of the Jews who are tossed about in the world by a cruel destiny. Like the leaves which rest a while when the wind is falling, but are soon caught up by a new gust, they, too, rest only for a short time and soon are driven again before the elements.

With the passage of years Silberschlag's individualism has abated and he has penned a number of poems in which the suffering and hopes of his people and the love of Palestine find vigorous expression. Such are *Yehudah*, *Kokhbé Kenaan*, and *Zel Ami*.

As an essayist Silberschlag has primarily devoted himself to literary criticism, with especial emphasis in the field of general literature. His collection of such essays *Tehiah we-Tehiah be-Shirah* (Wonder and Renaissance in Poetry) contains a number of studies written at different times and dealing with French poets, particularly Baudelaire, Irish poets, and several German ones. In them he approaches the works of the poets, as he himself says, with love and appreciation, and strives to reveal their thoughts and emotions which are only half expressed in their rhymes and verses. He devotes considerable space to the portrayal of the lives and environments of the poets and indicates their influence and their modes and peculiarities of expression. The style of the essays is itself semi-poetic and readily readable. The collection, both on account of its subject matter and its approach, forms an important contribution to literary criticism in Hebrew.

CHAPTER XVI

FEIGIN'S BIBLICAL STUDIES; GRAYZEL'S HISTORICAL SOURCE BOOKS; MALACHI'S STUDIES IN LITERARY HISTORY; AND MAISLISH'S MAḤSHABAH WE-EMET

i. American Jewish scholarship in Hebrew has recently been enriched by the contribution made by Samuel Feigin (above p. 1078) in his volume *Misitré ha-Abar* (Chapters out of the Past). This volume is divided into two parts, one devoted to studies dealing with events and episodes in Jewish history during the Biblical period as well as with exegesis of difficult passages in several books, and the other a collection of essays on the Hebrew language and the origins of the Hebrews and their vicissitudes in the pre-Biblical period.

The point of view of the author who is a Semitist of note, especially in the field of Assyriology, can be characterized as that of moderate Biblical criticism. He makes numerous efforts to defend tradition against those who minimize its value and to prove its authenticity in many instances, but he also frequently deviates widely from it. He is especially prone to offer emendations of various Biblical passages and thereby to interpret and reconstruct the events dealt with in these passages. It is through these emendations that he succeeds in maintaining the general historicity of the events as given in the Bible against the critics who reject it, but, as said, he introduces variations in details from the Biblical narrative. While most of these emendations seem plausible, some of them appear to be unnecessary.

Of the studies in the first part dealing with historical events, those about Jephthah and his period, the defeat of Sennacherib in Judea in the year 701 B.C.E., and the contention of Solomon and Adoniyahu for the succession to kingship after David deserve special notice. In the first, the author offers the novel suggestion that Jephthah was not the son of Gilead by a harlot, as indicated in Judges XI, 1, but was an adopted son; further that Gilead which is the name of a part of Transjordan, is not a proper name but an adjective, and that his full name is Yáir ha-Giladi, i.e., of Gilead, as he is called in Judges X, 3, 4, 5. This

suggestion removes a number of difficulties which the critics found in the narrative as given in the Massoretic text. The word novel is used designedly, for the device of adoption is not known in Jewish law. It is not mentioned explicitly anywhere in the Bible, nor is it referred to in later Talmudic law which represents a highly developed form of Jewish law. Feigin, however, establishes its existence on the basis that cases of adoption are frequently encountered in Semitic law, especially in the Babylonian, and that the Jews could not possibly have been averse to its inclusion in their own legal system. In fact, he attempts to find reference to the practice of this device in the Book of Ezra in another essay in this volume.

The correctness of this thesis may be questioned as well as the necessity of its assumption for the understanding of the narrative about Jephthah in the Book of Judges. But the value of our author's essay on this episode is not minimized, for in its several chapters it sheds much light upon the time and events of Jephthah's judgeship. It explains quite satisfactorily why Jephthah, in his diplomatic letter to Ammon, defends the Israelitish title to the lands which formerly belonged to Moab but which were conquered by them from Sihon the Amorite, while he does not defend the title to Ammonite lands. The plausible suggestion is that, at the time, Ammon had either conquered Moab or had merged with it for a while. The essay also sheds much light upon the conquest of Yair in Transjordan which is referred to at numerous times in the Bible, but always under a special name *Hawot Yair*. Feigin explains the term accurately. The essay also offers a fair solution to the problem of the war of Jephthah with the Ephraimites as told in Chap. XII, 1-6, for the question arises why the Ephraimites, who dwelt on the other side of the river, should have quarreled with Jephthah for not inviting them to join him in the war against Ammon, since the war was a local affair of the tribes of Transjordan. The suggestion is made that there was an Ephraimitish colony which had settled in Transjordan. The author also discusses the length of Jephthah's judgeship in relation to various dates, such as that of the Exodus, which is fixed by this very narrative as having taken place 340 years before the time of Jephthah, and that of the building of the Temple by Solomon which date is likewise fixed at 480 years after the Exodus (I Kings VI, 1). The conclusions of the author may be questioned, for the date of the Exodus on which the whole discussion hinges is not definitely settled, but the discussion, as a whole, is of interest. Of interest also is the

author's ascription of Psalm LXXXIII to the time of Jephthah as against many critics who usually ascribe it to a much later time, some to the Maccabean period. The date assumed by Feigin is consistent with the content.

The group of essays on Sennacherib's defeat which deals with numerous aspects, such as the nature of the pestilence in the Assyrian army, the number of men stricken, the sequence of events in the campaigns, the treaty with the king of Babylon, and the activities of Hezekiah, is distinguished by the erudition displayed and by the light it sheds upon the episode. The Biblical narrative of this series of events is found in two versions in II Kings XVIII, 13 — XX, 21 and in Isaiah Chapters XXXVI — XL which deviate from each other in certain particulars, and, on the whole, present a number of problems. Feigin straightens out most of them. His most plausible explanation relates to the date of the campaign which is given in both versions as the 14th year of the reign of Hezekiah. His suggestion that we read in the text "the twenty-fourth year" instead of the "fourteenth," which involves only a slight change in the Hebrew numerals, removes many difficulties, especially the contradiction between the Biblical date of the campaign and the inscription of Sennacherib which fixes the date at 701 B.C.E. The fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah is 711, while the twenty-fourth is 701.

However, the principal contribution of our author, namely, that the number stricken by the angel was not 185,000, as stated in the Bible, but 185, is questionable. Though the emendation of the text which he proposes introduces only a slight change in the words, yet it is unacceptable on account of the smallness of the number. He claims that the pestilence referred to in the Bible was the *Shibu*, a high fever which was dreaded by the Assyrians as many inscriptions testify. Furthermore, basing himself on II Chronicles XXXII, 21, where no number is given, but it is stressed that the stricken were high ranking officers, he argues that since those stricken were important officers and the disease was dreaded, Sennacherib decided to withdraw. Still, it is very improbable that the death of 185 men in an army of several hundred thousand would make a veteran conqueror withdraw. The argument from II Chronicles does not prove much, for its author omitted many things mentioned in the Book of Kings. Besides, the very language of II Chronicles V, 21 disproves our author's assertion. It reads, "And the Lord sent out an angel who cut off all the mighty men of valor and the

leaders and the captains in the camp of the king of Assyria." There were certainly more than 185 men of valor and captains in the Assyrian army; nor are the words of Isaiah, "And the remnants of the trees of his forest (i.e. the army) shall be few, that a child may write them down" (X, 19) compatible with such number. With the exception of this interpretation, the group of essays is of great value.

In the essay on Solomon and Adoniyahu, the author points out the political and social causes which underlay the struggle for the throne between the two pretenders. Adoniyahu had on his side the law of primogeniture, while Solomon relied upon the oath given by David to Bath-Sheba that her son would succeed to the throne. The followers of the former were mainly Judeans whose capital was Hebron and who looked askance at the rise of Jerusalem, which was partly in the land of Benjamin, as the new capital, and hence Joab, the veteran general, a leading Judean, was with them. The followers of the latter were the people of the new capital and also many belonging to other tribes who wanted to minimize the power of Judah. The prophet Nathan joined them, for he believed that the throne belongs to God and it is He who appoints through his prophet the rightful king. This explanation agrees with a number of details in the narrative which Feigin utilizes skillfully.

There is much exegetic value in these essays for numerous comments on verses in the Bible are contained in them and many difficult passages are thus clarified. Especially interesting are his explanations of a number of verses based on the principle that the order of certain words in the verses should be changed. (1)

The leading essay in the second part is the *Shemot ha-Safah ha-Ibrit* (The Names of the Hebrew Language). It contains much more than its title implies. Besides a discussion of the various names applied to this language, such as the Biblical *Yehudit* and *Sefat Canaan*, the term *Ibrit* from the middle of the Second Commonwealth on and *Leshon ha-Kodesh*, used in the Mediaeval period and afterward, it also offers a theory on the antiquity of the Hebrew settlement in Palestine. The author rejects the views of many scholars that Hebrew is only a branch of the Canaanite language and that the Hebrews borrowed this language along with a large part of their culture from the Canaanites. On the contrary, he claims that the Hebrews lived in Palestine for a long time, even before the time of Abraham, and that they developed the language there, as testified by certain geographical terms, and that

(1) See pp. 133-139.

gradually the language became the common language of all the peoples living there, the Canaanites and the Phoenicians. Abraham's settlement represents only one of several migrations of the Hebrews to Palestine. The essay contains a number of fine elucidating remarks on ancillary subjects, such as the introduction of the square script known as the Assyrian, the exclusive use of Hebrew in certain parts of the ritual and prayers, and its relation to Aramaic in Jewish life and literature.

A number of essays are devoted to a summary of important historical books, such as *Hebrew Origins* by Prof. Meek, *The Dawn of Conscience* by H. J. Breasted. The value of these essays lies not in the summary but in the critical remarks upon the views of the authors, especially those upon the work of Prof. Meek. Feigin finds much to object to in Meek's survey of Hebrew history from the Patriarchs to the end of the First Commonwealth. He frequently defends the views of Jewish tradition against the exaggerations of Meek. Like many extremists, Meek does not accept the Biblical tradition in many cases, but frequently deviates from it to great extremes. Among other essays worthy of note is the one on the date of the Exodus which Feigin fixes as 1379 B.C.E.

The book, as a whole, displays great erudition and mastery of sources. Especially is this evident in the numerous notes which quote all available works on the subjects discussed. Some of the notes are essays in miniature. The work is, therefore, irrespective of whether we agree with the author in some of his conclusions, a worthy addition to Jewish scholarship in Hebrew in this country.

ii. A valuable contribution to Jewish historical scholarship in this country is Solomon Grayzel's historical source book entitled *The Church and the Jews in the Thirteenth Century*. It possesses importance in spite of the shortness of the period it covers (1198-1254), because the thirteenth century marks a turning point both in the general history of Western Europe and in Jewish history, perhaps even more in the latter than in the former. It is in that century that the feudal system reached its height and began to decline and that the middle class rose to prominence and began to assert itself in commerce and in city administration. It was in the thirteenth century that the Church reached the height of its power in influencing the conduct of kings, princes, and the peoples of Europe. All these factors greatly affected the Jewish situation. However, it was primarily the attitude of the Church which was most intimately concerned with the Jews and which, therefore, had the greatest effect upon Jewish destiny, an effect which extended for five

more centuries until the middle of the eighteenth century. In fact, the Jewish Middle Ages with all their tribulations and suffering really began after the Crusades.

Grayzel's book consists of two parts. There is a section devoted to a survey of the relations between the Church and the Jews during the period, and another section which quotes the origins, the sources themselves. The book, as a whole, sheds much light upon the economic, political, and cultural conditions of the Jews at the time.

Several interesting points emerge from the mass of material about the official and theoretical attitude of the Church towards the Jews. The basic Church view was that the responsibility of the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus consigns them to a status of perpetual inferiority and even of slavery, and that the relation between Christianity and Judaism resembles that of a free mistress and a bond-woman. On the other hand, the Church insisted that the Jews must exist and that it is acceptable to God that they should live under Catholic kings and princes for a number of reasons: (a) they constitute a proof for the truth and triumph of Christianity; (b) they are the guardians of the Old Testament which is the source and proof of the Christian faith; and (c) a remnant of them will be saved and returned to the right path.

It is the oscillation between these two points of view which determined the attitude of the Church to the Jews. On the one hand, the Popes of the thirteenth century issued numerous Bulls to kings, princes, and clergy which urged discriminations and restrictions of all kinds against the activities of the Jews, and advocated that they be consigned to a status of degradation. On the other hand, they frequently protected them against violence and insisted that they be allowed to retain the rights formerly granted them, and objected to the destruction of synagogues, and even at times to forcible conversion.

We also learn from this work of other factors which induced the Church to follow this double policy, and it becomes evident that Jewish influence on the Christians was not negligible. Cases of Christians becoming proselytes to Judaism were not infrequent. Jews often debated privately with their neighbors, pointing out the weak points of Christianity and at times even ventured to speak lightly of religious symbols.

The Church thus felt a certain need for defense. Furthermore, there was another factor which heightened that need, namely, the economic and social position of the Jews. With all the discriminations the Jews did not fare so badly. Many of them held offices in the state as financial

agents or tax farmers, a large number owned property, carried themselves with dignity, dressed like nobles, or wore clothes like the clergy. All these things worried the Church, and in consequence, the Popes continually endeavored to degrade the Jews. Pope after Pope warned kings not to appoint Jews as officers of any kind, and complained of their wealth and their insolence. Council after council enacted prohibitions against the Jews forbidding them to own Christian slaves or to employ Christian nurses, and likewise prohibiting Christians from drinking or eating together with Jews, or coming into close contact with them in general. All these enactments were designed so to degrade the Jews as to diminish their influence on the one hand, and to point out their inferiority on the other hand. The Church was especially zealous in enforcing the enactment of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 that the Jews should wear a special badge upon their outer garments so that they might be distinguished from the Christians and their difference from them be thus emphasized.

We are also informed that the Church had great difficulty in enforcing its discriminations. The civil authorities objected to them for various reasons, and the Jews themselves fought bitterly against some of them, especially against the badge. In the Spanish countries, Castile and Aragon, the Jews even threatened migration to the neighboring Mohammedan countries. As a result, the Popes had to compromise and relent in a number of cases. On the other hand, the princes and kings at times joined with the Church in oppressing the Jews. They were especially diligent in imposing upon the Jews a servitude of their own by means of the famous theory of *servi camerae* which was put into action in the thirteenth century and which held that the Jews are the servants of the king or his treasury. This theory, though not always interpreted literally, almost reduced them to the status of serfs. Grayzel offers a fine suggestion as to the origin of this concept. He believes that it arose out of the stratified state of society. Everyone in those days of feudalism belonged to a class which had a protector or lord. The Jews could not fit into any class, so the supreme power, the king, was the lord. Gradually, this relation assumed a stricter form, that of dependence and nominal servitude, which involved severe restrictions of movement as well as the power of the king over property and income.

These are a few of the points of interest presented in the fine survey of conditions of the period given by the author as Part I of his work. Two more points are worthy of notice. The first is the observation made

by Grayzel that the prohibition of the Church against charging interest on loans was limited only to cases when Christians were the borrowers and did not apply to charges against members of other faiths. The Church thus did not really take a higher moral tone in this matter than did Judaism which similarly prohibits the taking of interest from fellow Jews but permits interest from Gentiles. And in fact, we know that the rate of interest charged by Christian lenders, even monasteries, to Jews, was much higher than that charged by Jewish lenders.

The second point of interest is a statement in a Bull sent by Pope Innocent III to the Bishop of Livonia (the present Estonia), in which he advises the prelate to allow converted Jews to continue in marriages contracted before conversion even if the marriages were of the levirate variety, known as *Yibum*, namely with the widow of a deceased brother who had left no issue. The point of interest is not the leniency of the Church in such matters—it made many compromises in order to attract converts—but the fact that the Jews of Livonia in the twelfth century practiced *Yibum* rather than *Halizah*, which had been the usual mode of procedure in such cases for centuries preceding that date. In fact, as early as Talmudic times, objection was raised to *Yibum*, and in post-Talmudic times it became extremely rare. Indeed, when the brother-in-law was married, *Yibum* was completely impossible for the Jews of Western Europe in view of the ordinance of Rabbi Gershom against bigamy unless the brother-in-law divorced his wife. The query of the Bishop of Livonia regarding such cases shows that such marriages were still frequent occurrences in Livonia, a situation which represents a rather curious survival.

The original sources which occupy the larger part of Grayzel's book (circa 300 pages) consist of one hundred and thirty-two Bulls or letters sent by four Popes, Innocent III (1198-1216), Honorius III (1216-1227), Gregory IX (1227-1241), and Innocent IV (1241-1254) to various kings, princes, and prelates in all European countries, and forty-two decrees about the Jews by Church councils in European countries during the period. Both the letters and the decrees are given in the original Latin and in English translation with clarifying notes. There are also six appendices which contain succinct discussions of several important subjects, such as the character of Nicolas Donin, the converted Jew who debated with leading Rabbis of France in 1240 and was the cause of the burning of the Talmud in that year, and the political status of the Jews in the thirteenth century which, as noted above, deals

with the origin of the practical results of the *servi camerae* theory.

iii. A. Malachi, whose literary activity has been noted above (p. 1079), has, during the last several years, made several valuable contributions to the history of modern Hebrew literature. These are *Igrot Soferim* (Letters of Writers) and *Masot u-Reshimot* (Essays and Comments). The first is a collection of letters written by famous writers of the Haskalah period, such as Perez Smolenskin, David Gordon, M. Pines, J. L. Cantor, M. Lilienblum, W. Schur, Zvi Gershuni, and others. The letters have both a literary and an historical value. Thus the letters of Smolenskin reveal certain traits in the character of this novelist and champion of the revival of Hebrew literature and Jewish nationalism, especially the respect and zeal he displayed in encouraging young writers in whom he discovered a spark of talent. Those of Gordon, Pines, Cantor, and Lilienblum shed light on the history of the *Hobebé Zion* movement in its beginning. They emphasize the deep earnestness and the great devotion of those pioneers of Zionism to their ideal. No effort made for the purpose of helping the early colonists in Palestine was too small to elicit their interest. They report to each other of the progress of the movement and rejoice over every new house built or parcel of land acquired in any of the new colonies, and grieve over any obstacle placed in the path of the realization of the ideal. It was an era of small deeds indeed, but it was made great by the doers who were men of intellect and vision, men whose work created both a literature and a new life for an old people.

Of special interest for the history of Hebrew literature in America are the letters of W. Schur, the pioneer editor and publisher of several Hebrew monthlies in this country who was mentioned above (p. 1050). They reveal the bitter struggle of this stiff-necked lover of Hebrew in his effort to plant the seed of Hebrew letters in a parched soil. He pleads with his correspondents for help, both financial and literary, and rebukes them for disinterestedness. Three letters of Schur to H. Malachovsky throw a lurid light upon the bitterness of the struggle of this pioneer on behalf of Hebrew literature. In all of them he repeatedly pleads with the correspondent to collect two dollars for an advertisement which the *Shohare Sfat Eber*, a Hebrew-speaking society, inserted in his monthly *ha-Pisgah*. History is silent on the outcome of this plea.

The essays contained in the second book can be characterized as by-paths in Hebrew literary history, inasmuch as they deal either with forgotten Hebrew writers of the Haskalah period or with side aspects

in the literary activity of famous writers. To the first group belong the essays on Joseph Judah Lerner, Morris Wintchewski, Alexander Harkawy and Julian Klatzko. The literary career of the first was of short duration, but in its time, the late sixties and the early seventies of the last century, his critical essays made a considerable impression. And though he later forsook not only Hebrew but also his people and religion, he nevertheless deserves mention as a pioneer of modern criticism. Wintchewski was primarily distinguished as one of the founders of the Jewish socialist movement and as a Yiddish writer, but for a number of years he wrote primarily in Hebrew and gave voice to the socialist ideal in that language and edited a monthly for that purpose. Even later he contributed essays from time to time to Hebrew publications in this country. Harkawy, who is known primarily as a Yiddish philologist, likewise began his literary career in Hebrew. Klatzko, an exceptionally prodigious child, began his literary career in Hebrew at an early age. At sixteen he already had to his credit two books containing poems and short stories. But like many other gifted Jews, he soon forsook his people and religion and became a great Polish writer and political leader and, of course, was forgotten by his own people. However, the tragedy of such men, as well as the curious history of Klatzko, deserves recording.

In the second class of essays there are studies of "J. L. Gordon as Critic," "Shalom Aleichem as Hebrew Writer and Critic," "Bialik as Feuilletonist," "Ussishkin as Hebrew Writer," and "S. Tschernichowski's Appearance as Poet in the Light of Early Criticism." These aspects of the men mentioned represent, in a way, minor phases of their activity and not the main channel of their work. Gordon was primarily a great poet and a powerful publicist and Shalom Aleichem was the leading Yiddish humorist; Ussishkin was a great Zionist leader and Tschernichowski's first steps were slow and evoked modest appreciation. All these matters have importance for literary history and our author delineates these contributions and reflections in a skillful manner. Of special interest is the essay on J. L. Cantor, a well-known writer in the eighties and nineties of the last century, and editor and publisher of the first daily Hebrew paper *ha-Yom* (The Day, above pp. 441-2). In the essay a fine estimate is given of Cantor as writer and editor and of the character of the *ha-Yom*. In addition, we are presented with a succinct but accurate survey of the state of Hebrew literature at the end of the seventies and early eighties of the 19th century.

A collection of popular historical essays entitled *Zilile Dorot* (The Shadows of Generations) completes the works of Malachi in this period.

iv. A daring attempt to propound a philosophy of Jewish history from a point view different from that of Kaufmann (above p. 1221) was undertaken by Moses Maislish (pseud. M. H. Amishai) in his two-volume work, *Maḥshabah we-Emet* (Thought and Truth). While Kaufmann stresses the sociological aspect of Jewish history and deals primarily with social factors, Maislish adopts a philosophical point of departure and devotes himself almost entirely to charting the inner spiritual expressions of the Jewish genius in their metamorphoses through history. In general, his work is more nearly a philosophy of Judaism than a philosophy of the history of the Jewish people. In fact, the philosophy of Jewish history is dealt with only in the second volume of the work, while the first is devoted to the development of a general philosophic view, a survey of the entire human civilization and a history of thought in Western Europe. However, due to the all-encompassing theme of the work and its cryptic style which is evident, especially in the first volume, it would be impossible to follow the author in all the mazes of this thought. We will therefore devote ourselves to a statement of Maislish's view of Jewish history and confine ourselves only to a few remarks on his general philosophical outlook.

It is difficult to classify the philosophic view of our author and attach to it one of the labels of the current schools. In general, it can be characterized as an extreme humanism, for in it man is made practically the center of the world. Not only does Maislish follow Kant in making the world only a human world, namely, that it is only what man perceives and conceives, but he goes beyond him, borrowing elements from Schopenhauer and other later philosophers, and posits the will of man as the all-powerful factor in the process of human life and in his relation to the external world. As a result, we have before us a dualism of man and nature, which, when expressed under the aspect of force, resolves itself into will and law. And it is of these two pairs that, in the view of the author, the history of man from time immemorial to the present day is compounded. Even science is to him only the expression of the will of man for mastery of nature, and all other aspects of life, such as religion and art, are likewise products of the expression of the human will. It is superfluous to say that in such a view the personality and the activity of man are prime factors in the manifold of civilization and culture. The view of our author, however, does not result in an

extreme individualism, he includes the social element as a part of the personality of the individual, since every personality carries within it a consciousness of the *alter*, i.e., of the other person. Consequently, even the self-love of the individual includes love of the other. It is these views and premises which lie at the basis of his survey of the history of human civilization and of his philosophy of Jewish history.

It is evident that from such a point of view, the traditional conception that Judaism had its origin in revelation at Sinai, and thereafter continued to develop in a more or less uniform way through the ages, must be subjected to the test of criticism. Accordingly, our author, following the views of Biblical criticism, sees in the early Jewish history as related in the Pentateuch and in passages of the other historical books only a reflection of the ideas of later times which the writer injected into the past. He therefore attempts a reconstruction of Jewish history in the light of his basic principle, that all human history, the Jewish not excepted, is a result of the relation of the will, both of the individual and of the group, to the surrounding external world, as well as a record of the manifold expressions of the personality or the spirit of the group in its creative activities in time.

In the reconstruction of Jewish history, our author follows the view of the Biblical critics. Like them, he sees in the stories of the Exodus and the conquest of Palestine, as related in the Bible, only a later literary narrative of the gradual coalescence of groups of kindred tribes—Ephraimite and Judaic, or northern and southern—who entered Palestine at different times, into one nation. Like the critics, he believes that pure monotheism is the gift of the prophets, the culmination of a long struggle on the part of Israel towards the attainment of this exalted religious conception. However, Maislish enunciates a new principle in the development of Judaism, which imparts great value to its contribution to civilization as well as distinction to the history of the Jews. This principle is the importance of man and the completeness of his self-consciousness. In no history of any other nation does this principle come forward in such a forceful manner as in the history of the Jews.

The author finds the first expression of this principle in the story of man's short sojourn in Paradise and his ejection from there by God, as told in Genesis, Ch. III. In that story we see man striving against God in order to attain the knowledge of good and evil. He loses Paradise but gains self-consciousness, and what is more important, consciousness of morality. Man comes to know sin, as is evidenced by

the story of Cain, but he also comes to master it, as said: "And thou shalt rule over him" (Gen. IV, 7). In this fundamental conception of man which the Jews attained early in their career, there lies the source of their entire history. It is Judaism which placed the ideal of the good against that of the beautiful, the ideal of the Greeks, and made morality a leading factor in human life. Out of the sense of sin there emerged the concept of duty, for man was forced to rely on himself, and was freed from crass fear of the gods which dominated other religions. The gods of other nations were natural powers and were too close to man, and hence men feared and were in subjection to them. With the Jews, even in early times, probably due to desert environment where, on the whole, the full force of nature manifests itself only occasionally in storm, God was a super-mundane power. Fear was therefore not so frequent and man became more self-reliant and responsible. It is also this environment, too, which developed the conception of the importance of the other man, for in the desert man feels lonely and the presence of another man is appreciated. The Bible tends to mirror this interest in man and men, for it contains the chronology of generations as well as the story of the dispersion of men. Thus it affords an explanation of human differences, and at the same time asserts the unity of mankind.

All these strands of thought—the consciousness of man and the awareness of self and the *alter*, the concept of morality and the sense of sin and duty, and the super-mundane position of God, merged to form the web out of which prophecy emerged. In this great institution, our author detects three stages—the early stage in which the prophet is still close to the mythical and grosser form of religion; the second in which the prophet attributes moral attributes to God who is still limited; and the third, in which the prophecy raises God to the status of the universal God and elevates morality to a universal standard of conduct and a norm of thought.

The development of prophecy and these ideas, however, reflect only one phase of Jewish life during the period of the First Commonwealth. There was also another phase, that of the actual daily religion which was preserved and developed by the priesthood and which expressed itself in cult formation and in the guarding of tradition. In the course of time, there arose a struggle between the two. Prophecy emphasized creation and the holiness of man and life, while the priesthood stressed the value of the cult, order, and stability of religious forms. Out of the prophetic tradition, there eventually emerged a set of ideas which were

incorporated in the daily religion advocated by the priesthood. Of these the idea of God is the central one. For the prophets, God was not an abstraction of nature as He was in Greek philosophy, but is rather an all-embracing spiritual being, the source and manifestation of all spirituality in the world. He is essentially unknown and is manifested only by His ways which are those of morality. Hence, morality rises to the level of a cosmic force. In God as in man, the primacy of will is evident, and hence there follows a sense of His omnipotence which implies the creation of the world. This world, though, once it was created, is dominated by laws which God Himself established and which are permanent. God is thus not only the God of the world and man, but the Godhead itself becomes manifested with the creation of both.

As a result of such a conception, says our author, the center of interest in prophetic Judaism lies in this world and not in any other world. He therefore believes that the idea of immortality of the soul was originally foreign to Judaism, and that reward and punishment were conceived of only as being meted out in this world. It was held to be directed primarily to the nation and to be of a double aspect, material and spiritual. On its material side, it implied a future of national prosperity as reward by a just God for present tribulation, while on the spiritual side, it implied the realization of human moral perfection. And thus there emerged the great idea of the *End of Days*, which later took the form of Messianism and came to occupy a leading place in Jewish history. The *End of Days*, though, does not refer to a specific time in the distant future but to a state which can come at any time when man is ready for that perfection. Man thus becomes the master of his own fate and redemption, for they depend only upon his own conduct.

The particular vision of the future and the concept of reward evolved by prophecy explains, according to Maislish, on the one hands, the rise of the idea of the election of Israel, and on the other hand, the lack of zeal for proselytizing. Prophecy ascribed severe responsibilities to man, and the fulfillment of such duties could be carried out only by a special group devoted to great ideals. The ideals are of universal character and imply a change in the life of entire humanity, but the instrument of their realization can be only a limited group. Hence, the election of Israel implies a mission to disseminate these ideals in the world. These, then, are in brief the gist of the prophetic conception of God, man, and the world which, according to Maislish, constitute the real essence of Judaism, its distinct contribution, and the great forces

in the history of the Jewish people through the ages. Prophecy was interrupted by the Babylonian conquest of Judah while it was in the middle of its activity and thereafter ceased to exist, but its influence remained. Its emphasis upon life and upon the will of man led, says Maislish, to the birth of a new type of man previously unknown to civilization, and this birth was destined to bring great changes both in the history of the Jews and of humanity in general.

Prophecy, important as it was, however, revealed only one aspect of Judaism, while the priestly activity which was going on side by side with prophecy was another. This activity sought to stabilize the religion, and to endow laws with divine authority. Gradually, says our author, different traditions and laws emerged and were incorporated in the time of Hezekiah and again in the time of Josiah into parts of the Torah, the origin of which was placed in Sinaitic revelation. There was, of course, some opposition between prophecy and priestly activity, for their objects differed, yet there was also mutual influence and the former indirectly helped to strengthen the latter, and, as a result, the section of the people which went into the Babylonian Exile carried with it a hallowed Torah which was a source of strength.

The Exile, according to Maislish, marks not only a turning point in Jewish history, but also the beginning of a fundamental change in the life and destiny of the people. The Torah and the Book became substitutes for land, and cult replaced prophecy. Not only did prophecy cease thereafter, but even priesthood lost its power. True, there was a return, and the Temple was restored; and sacrifices were brought, but the authority of the institution was gone, for Israel became a kingdom of priests and each Jew shared equally in the cult. Curiously enough, our author does not view this new tendency which imparted spiritual exaltation to large numbers of Jews with favor. According to him, it gave rise to a type of Judaism which he calls Pharisaism and which in his opinion strayed from the real essence of pristine Judaism. Pharisaism, which emphasized the Torah and regarded it as a set of rules for living, created a rift between the people and its life on the land, inasmuch as it made Torah and law another fatherland. It narrowed election to the Jews only and prevented proselytism. He is quite aware that this tendency gave room for spiritual activity and was conducive to the survival of Jews through the millennia, but these features do not, in the eyes of our author, redeem its less attractive qualities.

It is in these terms that Maislish explains the clashes between the Pharisaic tendency and other tendencies represented by the priests and by the lower stratum of the people which occurred through the period of the Second Commonwealth. The main opposition came from the Sadducean party, which was principally composed of priests, although it included other elements as well. He regards the Sadducees as champions both of religion in its more pristine form and of a national life rooted in the land, and he points out that it was they who carried out the successful rebellion against the Syro-Greeks.

He also endeavors to explain from this point of view the differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees in regard to beliefs. The former emphasized the value of the individual, especially of one who studies the Torah, and hence they spoke of the providence of the individual, while the latter emphasized the providence of the nation. Likewise, the doctrine of the World to Come taught by the Pharisees offered consolation to the individual, for it stressed personal reward after death. Similarly, their Messianic ideal, though including national restoration bore an other-worldly character and differed greatly from the older idea of the End of Days. In addition, Pharisaism promised the resurrection of the individual. All these were repugnant to the Sadducees who made the life and future of the nation on the land the center of striving and aspiration.

However, the main rebellion against Pharisaic teachings, which concentrated religion in the Torah, had its seat, according to Maislish, in the lower stratum of the people who were close to the land and who, he believes, really preserved the values of prophecy. Externally, says he, the masses followed the Pharisees, but inwardly they developed a new religious tendency which contained important elements of prophetic teaching but was destined to have a much wider implication. It is also to the *Am ha-Arez*, i.e., the people of the land, that he attributes the entire Apocalyptic and Messianic movement which developed in Jewry in the last two centuries before the destruction of the Temple. They, he claims, once more stressed the value of man and exalted his moral power, and also resuscitated the idea of the End of Days, although they gave it a different setting.

Our author is quite aware of the great difference between the new Messianic movement and the older one of prophetic tradition, and he takes great pains to prove how the latter could emerge from the former. Basing itself on the prophetic concepts of the value of man, his mastery

over sin, and his power to overcome evil by improvement, it developed through the addition of grosser or Magian ideas which had penetrated into Judaism in a different direction. Sins and evil were not viewed in this philosophy as inner inclinations of man but were rather hypostetized as external powers in the world. As a result, the striving for redemption became not a desire for mere national redemption, but the redemption of the world from sin and evil, or, as it was grossly expressed, from the power of Satan. From this idea to changing the old idea of the End of Days into a period in which there is a new creation and an actual new world is only one step. In this tendency different and even contrary views gradually came to be united into one fluid mass which gripped the people and turned them into enthusiasts, mystics, and visionaries. The concept of original sin, i.e., a power which entered into the world with the sin of Adam, was developed, and redemption from it was conceived as depending upon an exceptional act, and the concept of the Kingdom of God assumed a supernatural aspect. In spite of all these somewhat alien features, the author claims that this tendency embodied essential elements of prophecy and only invested them with a new interpretation. He especially emphasizes its exalted conception of man which, through devious ways, made it possible for some currents in this tendency to raise man to such close relation with God that the Godhead could reveal itself through him.

It is from such point of view that Maislish attempts to explain both the last revolt and the rise of the new religion—Christianity. The revolt, according to him, was executed primarily by the lower stratum to whom the Zealots, the *Kannaim*, primarily belonged. They were enthusiastic about the great idea of redemption, to redeem not only the land of Israel from evil—typified in the Roman rule—but to redeem the world as a whole. He does not overlook their national zeal, but emphasizes that their real hope was that, with the downfall of Rome, the Kingdom of God in all its glory would be realized.

The rise of Christianity had its origin in the same tendency but in another current which was more ethereal and was even more separated from allegiance to land and nation. Its essence was also Messianic, but it emphasized the redemption of the whole world from evil by an exceptional act—the appearance of Jesus—who was regarded as both the announcer of redemption and the Messiah himself. The strength of this religion, injected into a world fermenting with a manifold of views and beliefs, philosophical and pagan, lay, says Maislish, in the

fact that it appealed to man and raised man to a cosmic power in the world, and called upon him to prepare for the redemption of the world as a whole. It conquered not in the name of God the Father, but in the name of the Son the man. He believes that the negative attitude to Torah was already implied in Jesus' teaching, but he was too provincial and his contact with the Gentiles was too limited to permit him to develop it explicitly. It was left to Paul, the man of the world, to turn this religious current, which endows man with a way of redemption from sin and evil, into a mighty stream. This, to our author, is the kernel of the message of the new religion, though it ultimately incorporated many strange and foreign elements. In general, Maislish grows too enthusiastic about the message of the new religion, and as a result exaggerates its influence in the beginning upon the Jewish masses in the lands of the Diaspora when he claims that the larger part of these Jews were absorbed by that religion. The assertion is hardly borne out by historical facts.

After devoting a considerable number of pages to the different systems of the *gnosis*, namely, the various mystic trends, he picks up the thread of Jewish history. Carrying his rather unfavorable view of Pharisaic Judaism into an estimate of the 2000 year period of existence in Exile, Maislish sees in that period, on the whole, a continuation of the original trend of Pharisaism, an endeavor to concentrate on the book and substitute it for real life. This type of Judaism, he claims, undoubtedly displayed great spiritual activity, but it was concentrated in study, a very static form of action. Consequently, it really has no history, for there was no development. The only history of Judaism in Exile is the history of revolts against Exile which, in reality, are rebellions against Pharisaism. Among such revolts he numbers Karaism which he connects with Sadducism. It wanted more of religion, and in its beginning it displayed signs of a rebellion against Exile, a strong striving for Palestine, and attempted a literary renaissance by turning to the study of the Bible and the Hebrew language. Karaism, however, failed because it did not create a mode of life but only a religion. It was therefore subsequently overpowered by external culture.

The spirit of revolt against the *Galut*, however, remained in the heart of the people, especially among the masses, and frequently broke forth in two ways—in a tangible way through the various Messianic movements, and intellectually through the Kabbalah and the philosophy of such men as Ibn Gabirol and Judah ha-Levi. The first emphasized

the value of man and the primacy of will, and the second expressed the folk longing for redemption and championed the primacy of spirituality in life against the rationalism embodied in Talmudic study and in philosophic theology represented by the Maimonidian school. Maislish detects expressions of revolt against the existing type of Judaism as well as against Exile in the activity of two great personalities, Spinoza and Sabbatai Zebi. The first expressed his striving to free himself as well as others from Judaism by negating the power of Torah in Exile. Spinoza contended that its authority ceased with the destruction of the state. Sabbatai Zebi revolted primarily against Exile and called for redemption, but indirectly he also rebelled against the dominance of the Torah and undertook to abrogate it in part. Our author believes that in Sabbatai Zebi the folk striving for the end of Exile achieved its most vigorous expression, though it was wrapped in a mantle of mysticism.

It is in the modern period that Maislish detects the climax of the revolt, both against Exile and that type of Judaism which he calls Pharisaic. It expressed itself at the beginning of the period in two ways—in the West, by the movement of assimilation, and in the East, first by Hassidism, and subsequently, by the nationalist movement and Zionism. The rise of national consciousness in European countries made it impossible for the Jew to continue in his racial and national distinction.

The Western Jew consequently made an attempt to negate that nationality and convert Judaism into a religion only. This was the real aim of the Reform movement, namely, to turn Judaism into a religion which could exist outside of the ghetto, a religion like Christianity which was devoid of the notion of nationalism. The idea of the mission which the leaders of the Reform movement propounded aimed to justify their conception by asserting that the very dispersion was part of the divine plan to enable the Jews to carry out their mission. They thus sought to remove from the dispersion the very stigma of it being an Exile. The movement failed for several reasons. First, even Reform did not emancipate the Jews entirely from the spiritual ghettos; second, the Western Jews were only a small part of a world Jewry which insisted on retaining its national aspect; third, because the movement came at the end of the nationalization of the European states and not in its beginning. The people of the world already conceived Judaism as an element foreign to their nationalism, and no amount of change

within it could alter their conception.

In the East, the rebellion was first expressed in the movement of Hassidism which Maislish glorifies unduly. Saturated with the spirit of Kabbalah, it carried with it the great longing for redemption, and by conceiving of the Zadik as a mediator between the people and God, it exalted the dignity and power of man. By its democratic spirit, it exalted the masses and freed them from their spiritual subjection to the learned aristocracy of the standard type of Judaism, and it also injected cheerfulness into Jewish life which was somber and gloomy.

This was followed by the Haskalah movement which he correctly characterizes as a movement of renaissance, inasmuch as it revealed the world to the Jews in the ghetto, and emphasized the value of the present as against the mere absorption in the past which the standard type of Judaism advocated. It thus prepared the way for the nationalistic movement.

The nationalist movement represents the real rebellion against ghetto life and against excessive concentration upon the study of the law. It is primarily secular and expresses itself in a variety of ways. Some movements, as that of Yiddishism and of national autonomy, accept existence in dispersion but insist on changing the pattern of Jewish life from ghetto type to a national and worldly one. The real redemption movement, however, according to Maislish, is political Zionism. It negates the Exilic past and looks towards the future. And here the author propounds a problem. What will the future be? Will it be merely a continuation of two-millennial life in Exile, or a return to pre-dispersion Judaism? He rejects the first possibility and hopes for new creative activity on the part of the Jews in the future which will have some connection with early Judaism, but will be new in content.

We have gone into the contents of this work at some length because its point of view is novel both in its conception of Judaism and in its analysis of Jewish history. The novelty does not lie in its revolutionary and rebellious tone or in its protest against the ideals of the two thousand year long Exile. This cry of protest has been heard before in modern Hebrew literature. It was uttered by the great rebels, Berdeschewski and Brenner (see above pp. 92f., 382f.). It is the tragic cry of modern intellectual Jews who, having been brought up in ghetto Judaism and reared in Torah, have later found themselves at odds with another culture which inspired them with its beauty and overpowered them with its strength. They cannot separate themselves from either.

Maislish, however, does not merely protest, as did the former rebels, because of inability to adjust themselves to the general world. Nor is his work, as was theirs, merely a series of disconnected and heated phrases of revolt. On the contrary, he has made an attempt to present a philosophy of Jewish history based upon an analysis of the contrary currents which have emerged in this history. It is a point of view fraught with a moral exaltation and a burning desire to enunciate the contribution of Judaism to human history. It is a daring attempt to survey the entire course of civilization in terms of his philosophy and to oppose the attitude of the standard type of Judaism which has dominated Jewry for more than 2000 years. It is a work amazing in the erudition displayed by the author who was a young man when he wrote it, and made impressive with brilliant flashes of thought. But to say that the content justifies the title would be false. We cannot go into detail of criticism. Suffice it to say that to deprecate a type of Judaism which has been the greatest factor in Jewish survival, as Maislish himself admits, to consider two thousand years of a history miraculous in its deeds and spirit as merely an accident, as he does; to speak of a future unrelated to the immediate past are, to speak mildly, grievous errors. Pharisaic, Judaism, as he calls it, had many sources of life, power, and strength which fed the springs of Jewish vitality and which were overlooked entirely by Maislish. The errors in his historical judgment as well as in his hope for the new future are especially glaring in the light of present events.

In conclusion, we can say that a satisfactory philosophy of Jewish history is still needed, for while this book undoubtedly contains much thought it does not contain all the truth about that history.

SURVEYS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH PRESS

A—YIDDISH PRESS; B—HEBREW PRESS;
C—ANGLO-JEWISH PRESS.

A YIDDISH PRESS

1. General Characteristics.

We have already had occasion to refer briefly to the role which Yiddish journalism played in the rise of the extensive Yiddish literature in this country as well as to the origin of the press (above pp. 996-998). However, such a great social institution, which recently celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its existence, deserves more than a reference, and is entitled at least to a succinct survey of its history. An account of its growth, development, struggles and triumphs—in short, its ups and downs for three quarters of a century—will simultaneously present to us a cross section of Jewish life during that period in all its aspects, social, cultural, and economic.

Due to a concatenation of circumstances, that span of time brought about the migration of several million Jews from their old homes into a new country and their acclimitization in America. The Yiddish press reflects the vicissitudes of the life of that group in a greater degree than the English press reflects the general life. And not only does it reflect the life of the Jewish group in this country, but also throws much light upon the course of events in Jewish life during seven or eight decades in East-European lands, the former homes of the immigrants. For the larger part of the seventy-five years, the new Jewish center in this country was culturally and spiritually a colony of the older centers, and every new movement or social tendency there immediately had an echo among the recently settled masses of American Jewry. Consequently, the Yiddish press, using a language common to both the American and East-European Jewish groups, served as a medium through which all the cultural and spiritual tendencies of European Jewry found expression. That this particular attitude and direction of the press brought important results, shaping American Jewish life, will become evident in the course of the survey.

As pointed out above (pp. 997-998), the first stratum of the mass

immigration during the eighties of the last century consisted, on the one hand, of a large number of Jewish working men from the smaller towns of Eastern Europe, and on the other hand, of small merchants and petty traders without any definite occupation. Both of these groups turned largely to the needle or cigar trades which were mostly in the hands of earlier Jewish settlers of German extraction and were easy to learn. Thus, in a short time, a Jewish proletariat of considerable numbers came into existence. Simultaneously, there arrived in these years a limited number of intellectuals, some imbued with radical ideas, primarily socialistic, and some inoculated with anarchistic ideas. These intellectuals, who had mastered Yiddish, found this language the easiest medium for propagandizing their ideas and became leaders of the proletariat by organizing them into unions and imbuing them with their views. It was for the purpose of propagandizing their views that various newspapers were started and published. Consequently, the party character was much in evidence, though the imparting of news and information was not entirely neglected. Hence the stamp of partisanship was impressed on the Jewish press during the earlier period of its development. It is out of this complex of circumstances that certain characteristics arose which imparted to that press a distinct character of its own, and prevented it from becoming merely a version of the general press in another language.

The partisanship spoken of above was for a long part of the time one of the most important traits of the Yiddish press. The majority of the publications bore the character of a party press—though primarily of a social and cultural rather than a political nature. Its main function was conceived by the founders of the numerous weeklies and dailies not to be the dissemination news like the general press, but rather the presentation of ideas and views of life designed to change the economic conditions and social outlook of its readers. Even later, when things began to change and the class struggle to subside, the press did not altogether lose that character. The close relation between American and European Jewries and the continued immigration of intellectuals and writers, followers of these movements and tendencies who likewise aspired to leadership, helped to maintain that character, though in a modified and changed form.

There were, of course, a number of periodical publications which were not stamped by this characteristic, as they represented the views of the nascent middle class inclined to conservatism. But even these did not

entirely escape the tendency to partisanship, since they endeavored to maintain the traditional Jewish attitude to life which was attacked and derided by the publications of the radical tendency. In consequence, they tended to devote a considerable amount of space both to defense and to polemics.

Another characteristic of this press is that, on the whole, its publications, even the dailies, contained many magazine features. This was due partly to its tendency to promote a viewpoint, and to a degree, to the character of its readers. On the one hand, the moving spirits of the Yiddish press used it as a vehicle for the spread of their ideas and undertook to inculcate their readers by means of articles and short essays with their views, and, in general, to raise their cultural level. On the other hand, the readers, who were not acquainted with any other language, were in need of some literary material to satisfy their emotional and intellectual cravings as well as their desire for amusement and relaxation and expected to find this material in the press. The demand created a supply. That the type of literary material varied according to the changing levels of the readers at various times goes without saying. It was thus that this press, during the course of its development, served as a nursery of a ramified Yiddish literature. But even after that literature came into existence, the press still retained these features and even improved them to a great extent. The greater part of the readers had little time for the reading of books, and the press, therefore, had to satisfy, in both its daily and Sunday issues, whatever need there was for literature in its various forms.

This characteristic was strengthened by an ideological motive which has been prominent in Jewish life for the last several decades and is known as Yiddishism. We have already described above its strivings and aspirations. It may, therefore, be sufficient to say in passing that the greater part of the writers who contribute to the daily press are imbued with this ideal of achieving permanent cultural values in Yiddish, and endeavor to make the press the vehicle of its realization by raising its literary character as much as possible. It is also natural that the publishers of this press should endorse this view in order to prolong the existence of their publications and to save them from being engulfed by the process of adjustment to environment going on among the masses of American Jewry. It is thus that the tendency to emphasize repeatedly the values of the Yiddish language and its literary creation as permanent factors in the struggle for national existence has become a characteristic of

the Yiddish press.

As a result of these characteristics, the influence of the Yiddish press upon Jewish life during the seven decades of its existence has been exceptionally great. It has fought for various ideals and endeavored to inculcate them in the hearts of its readers. It has supplied them not only with information upon the complex phenomena of Jewish life, but has also interpreted its various tendencies and championed movements with the zeal of propagandists. That many of the ideals, views, and theories which found their expression in the publications of that press were not conducive to the best interests of Jewry in this country is irrelevant, for many ills which were prevalent in the youthful period were cured by time and social change. What is relevant is that at any period of its history that press was an important factor in the shaping of Jewish life. The history of the press, on the whole, can be divided into four periods corresponding roughly to the following spans of time: the first extending from 1870 to 1884; the second from 1884 to 1914; the third from 1914 to 1928; and the last from 1928 on to the present. Each of these periods has its special traits by which it is distinguished, though the lines are not fast drawn and often merge into one another.

2. *First Period.*

The first period extended for fourteen years during which a number of attempts were made to establish permanent Yiddish weeklies, but with one exception, without success. The beginning was made by J. K. Buchner in March, 1870, when he published *Die Yiddische Zeitung*, a weekly. It did not, however, appear regularly, and often months elapsed between one issue and another. In this sporadic manner it managed to survive for several years until the end of 1873. Its content, supplied entirely by the editor, bore more the character of a series of sermons and patriotic speeches than that of a periodical. This was due, in part, to the fact that it had a political background, for it was subsidized by the Democratic party of New York City. Another Yiddish weekly, the *Post*, also made its appearance in July of the same year. The publisher was Zebi Hirsh Bernstein and the editor Zebi Gershuni. The *Post* was of a higher calibre, inasmuch as both the publisher and editor were *Maskilim* and possessed learning and some knowledge of journalism. It appeared regularly for about three quarters of a year, and apparently filled a need, for due to the Franco-Prussian war which broke out that year and which it reported adequately to the news hungry immigrants, it attained a circulation of 4000, an exceptional achieve-

ment for those times. Its success encouraged the publisher to launch upon a larger venture, the publication of the *Hebrew News*, a four-lingual weekly, employing Yiddish, Hebrew, English and German, and to discontinue the *Post*. He thereby aimed to reach all strata of the Jewish population, the East- as well as the West-European immigrants, the intellectuals as well as the masses. However, his calculations miscarried, and the new venture lasted only several months. A year later, in 1872, another attempt at the publication of a Yiddish weekly, *Die New Yorker Yiddische Zeitung* was made by Kasriel Sarasohn, who was destined to become the real founder of the daily Jewish press. His first venture in the field was, however, unsuccessful, and the weekly lasted only five months. But he was not discouraged and two years later began to publish another weekly, *Die Yiddische Gazetten*, an undertaking which laid a solid foundation for the Yiddish periodical press in this country, for that weekly existed for fifty-two years, until 1928.

3. *The Second Period.*

With the establishment by the energetic Sarasohn in 1885 of *Dos Yiddische Tageblatt*, the Yiddish daily press made its appearance. In fact, he made an earlier attempt at such a publication in 1881, but that venture lasted only two months. The *Tageblatt*, however, continued publication for forty-three years, until 1928.

The first four years of the eighties of the last century brought to this country a large number of immigrants from East-European countries, especially from Russia, and this influx made the success of a daily possible. However, this was only the beginning; greater things were to happen during the next thirty years which can be called the storm and stress period in the history of American Jewry. It was during this period that close to two million Jews came to the shores of the United States, passed through a period of adjustment marked by struggle, adaptation to a new life, new trades, building of institutions and organizations, and the rise of movements and tendencies. This variegated complex of events found its expression for a large part of the period in the Yiddish press whose language was the vernacular of the great majority of the immigrants, who in turn were the cause for the spread and ramification of this press.

As pointed out above, this was the period of the proletarianization of the newly settled Jewish masses and the heyday of the activity of the recently arrived intellectuals who became the leaders of these masses, primarily through the printed and spoken word. These intellectuals

were followers of all shades of radicalism, most of them inclined to conservative socialism, but a considerable minority also to anarchism. They endeavored to inculcate these ideas in the hearts of the masses whom they undertook to lead.

As early as 1885, Abraham Cahan, who was destined to play a leading role in Yiddish journalism began to publish, together with Charles Raevsky, a weekly, *Die Neie Zeit*, which proved to be a rather abortive attempt. But in the same year a more successful weekly, *Die Yiddishe Volkszeitung*, published and edited by several radical intellectuals, of whom Moses Minz was the leading spirit, made its appearance. The following five years until the end of the decade saw an abundance of weekly publications, some of which were of short duration and some endowed with longer life. The most noted among these were: *Der Folks Advocat* established in 1888, published and edited by Michael Minz, a brother of Moses; *Die Warheit*, in 1889; *Die Arbeiter Zeitung*, in 1890; and the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme* in 1890. The first was of a general liberal tendency, the 2nd and the 4th were inspired by groups inclined to anarchism, while the third was an undertaking of the incipient socialistic party. Attempts were also made to publish weeklies in large cities outside of New York, such as Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago, of which *Der Yiddisher Courier*, established by Michael Minz in Chicago in 1888 was the most successful, as it was soon turned into a daily and published by the Ginsburg family for over fifty years until it was discontinued in 1944.

During the next decade, while the stream of East-European immigrants did not cease to flow, profound changes took place in the economic life of the masses. Not only were they proletarianized, but they also became conscious of the fact and endeavored to improve the situation by organization. Through the efforts of newly developed leaders, unions were established and numerous other undertakings were projected. Since all these activities needed both expression and encouragement, the result was a new crop of journals, which this time also included several dailies. In 1891, the indefatigable Michael Minz began to publish *Der Tæglicher Yiddisher Herald* — at first only six times a week, the seventh day being reserved for the *Folks Zeitung*. In 1894, the daily, *Dos Abend Blatt*, founded by a number of Jewish socialistic groups and edited by Philip Kranz, made its appearance and continued until 1902. Five years later, the *Forverts* was founded by a group of socialists with Abraham Cahan as editor. Soon thereafter he resigned, but returned again in 1903,

and still presides over the destinies of this most influential daily. Two years later, Jacob Sapirstein, who played an important role in the development of the Yiddish press, founded *Die Abend Post* which continued in existence until 1903, and in 1901 he began to publish the Yiddish daily, *Der Morgen Journal*, which continues to the present day.

In 1902 a group of wealthy Jews belonging to the Reform wing in Jewry, becoming apprehensive of the radical tendency of the majority of the Yiddish dailies and weeklies, decided to counteract this tendency by establishing *Die Yiddische Welt*, a daily intended to be conducted in a conservative spirit on a higher journalistic level and imbued with an attitude of respect and reverence for tradition. The best journalistic talents of the time were engaged, most of whom espoused the middle class view, but also some who belonged to the moderate socialistic group. The attempt, in spite of its good intentions and its superior journalistic character, was not successful, and after a struggle of three years it was sold to the owners of the *Tageblatt* who discontinued its publication. With the founding of another daily, *Die Wahrheit*, by a veteran journalist and socialist leader, Louis Miller, in 1905, the list of dailies which appeared in New York during the second period closes. The *Wahrheit*, however, was in reality no addition to the number of dailies in the Metropolis, for it really took the place of the *Teglicher Herald*.

The tendency to publish dailies soon spread outside of New York, and during the last decade of the period several were founded in leading provincial cities. Besides the *Chicago Courier* which appeared daily from the 90's on, there was established in Montreal in 1907 the daily *Kenneder Odler*, published by H. Wolowsky, which appears to the present day, and in the following year, there began to appear in Cleveland, the daily, *Die Yiddische Welt*, published and edited by J. Rocker. It continued until 1944.

In addition to the dailies, there appeared a large number of weeklies and monthlies of various tendencies and directions. Most of them, however, were of a radical character devoted to the spread of socialistic ideas. There were, simultaneously, a number of attempts on the part of the nationalists and lovers of Zion and Zionist groups to publish weeklies in order to propagandize their ideas. In general, all these weeklies and monthlies were short-lived, and only the monthly, *Die Zukunft*, a periodical founded as early as 1891 by the socialistic groups, and the weeklies, *Der Amerikaner*, which began to appear in 1905 as a companion of the daily *Morgen Journal*, and bearing the stamp of the policy of that daily,

Der Yiddisher Kempfer (1906), and *Dos Yiddishe Folk* (1909, organs of the Laborites (Poale Zion) and general Zionists respectively, managed to survive to the present day. Of these, only *Der Amerikaner* and *Dos Yiddishe Folk* continued without interruption, while the others had long periods of cessation.

In attempting to delineate the character of the press during this comparatively long period of its development, we must note at the outset that it is not of a homogeneous nature but reflects several shades corresponding to the changes which took place in the life of the masses. On the whole, the period can be divided into two epochs, the first from 1884 to 1905, and the second from 1905 to 1914. It is the earlier epoch which can be characterized as the "storm and stress" period of Jewish life. During that time the masses gradually adjusted themselves slowly to the environment, and while this process was going on there went on, simultaneously, a struggle on the part of the various leaders for exerting influence upon them. The press of this epoch was, to a large extent, radical, and with the exception of the *Tageblatt* in New York and the *Chicago Courier*, organs of the rising middle class which were conservative in nature, the other dailies, weeklies, and monthlies bore that stamp.

On the whole, the level of the press was low and reflected the tastes of the readers who, in the last decades of the 19th century, were of comparatively low cultural status. Its leading traits were propaganda and sensationalism. Endeavoring to direct the masses toward a certain attitude to life, the writers and editors, while apparently aiming to raise the cultural level of the masses, in reality descended to their level. The propaganda was adjusted to the conception of the readers. The articles on social and cultural phases were written in a manner calculated to arouse class antagonism. As a result, polemics was an exceptionally prominent feature. Especially vigorous were the polemics against religion and tradition. In the early days of the socialist movement, religion and traditional beliefs were considered the strongest allies of capitalism, and consequently, the protagonists of the movement endeavored to free the proletariat not only from subjection to an economic order, but also from the yoke of religion and tradition. This work was considered a kind of cultural elevation. Polemics were also injected into other departments, particularly in reporting of news, general and Jewish, and in relations with the more conservative organs and writers. Attacks upon opponents formed almost a daily diet in the radical press.

The press was also dominated by sensationalism which was a frequent

feature in the general popular press and which the Yiddish not only imitated but exceeded. The readers who were, on the whole, hard-working men, looked to their journals for excitement and emotional stimulation. This stimulation was supplied by the literary or fictional part of the press, which was distinguished by its romantic and to a degree, erotic aspects. Dailies and weeklies carried, in interminable installments, long fantastic novels in which the most grotesque events took place. These characteristics were by no means limited to the radical journals, but were the common properties of the press in general. The news of the few conservative publications was no less colored by sensationalism, nor was their fiction on any higher level. In addition, these papers carried on a rabid polemic against the radicals, popularly known as *Genossen*, i.e. comrades, in defense of religion, tradition, and the orthodox way of life which they attacked.

There was, however, also a more positive side to this press. First, these characteristics were not the share of all the numerous publications which appeared during this epoch. There were a number of writers and editors who endeavored to the best of their ability to improve the taste of their readers, and though they did not always succeed, their efforts contributed much to the improvement which began to be noticeable in the second epoch. Second, we must note the contribution of this press to the development of Yiddish and its emergency from a semi-barbarous jargon in which the Germanic element dominated, into a more or less literary language possessing a clear, intelligent, and often vigorous style. Much of this improvement was due to the influence of the immigrants who hailed from the Jewish centers in East-European countries where the development of Yiddish and its literature had already made great strides by the turn of the century. Third, the press contributed greatly towards the rise in this country of a Yiddish literature of higher quality. Not only did it make room for the writings of the newly arrived able and trained writers, but it gradually began to avail itself of the services of the established European Yiddish writers, such as Perez, Shalom Aleichem, Mendele, Asch, and others, and their sketches, novels, and poems became regular features in the various journals. These in turn not only slowly improved the taste of the readers, but also served as an incentive for development of local talents. Last, but not least, the press contributed to the general elevation of the cultural level of its readers by arousing their aesthetic interest through the sections of literary criticism and reviews of the theatres and music. In the

epoch under discussion these efforts were frequently crude and often colored by the personal bias of the writers and also by the business interests of the publishers, especially in regard to the theatre, but as years passed, the level of these sections rose and their influence became evident.

With the beginning of the second epoch, namely, the decade which elapsed between 1905 and 1914, great changes entered into the life of American Jewry, which were, of course, reflected in the metamorphoses of the press. First, the process of adjustment to the environment on the part of the immigrants made great strides. Many who belonged to the proletarian class improved their economic condition and became members of the middle class. This change affected not only the masses, but also the intellectual leaders. On the other hand, those who remained in the working class were already more solidly organized into unions which improved their economic situation considerably. Second, in this decade, on account of the extremely precarious situation in Russia, an exceptionally large number of immigrants came to this country, among them a number who were of an intellectually higher type than those of the earlier period. Due to the more stabilized economic situation of the Jewish masses, the newly arrived immigrants adjusted themselves economically in a short time and did not go through the proletarian stage. Third, there was injected into American life the idea of nationalism in its various forms, from Zionism to the Diaspora type espoused by the *Bund* and its followers (see above p. 496f).

As a result of all these factors, the character of the Yiddish press began to change. On the one hand, with the cessation of the sharp economic struggle, the propagandistic feature of the radical press began to disappear, and along with it went the acrimonious polemic against the more conservative forms of life, especially against religion. The rise of a fairly established middle class with its religious and cultural institutions not only dampened the ardor of the attack but also evoked respect, and indirectly, exerted some influence upon the business phase of the press. On the other hand, the changed type of readers who demanded better reading material forced the publishers and editors to satisfy that demand. Spurred on by the rise of Zionistic weeklies and the spread of nationalistic ideas, the Yiddish press, as a whole, began to pay attention to this movement; not only the organs of the middle class, but even those of the radical type started to devote considerable space to Zionist news, and some of them even published articles and essays. Thus, *Die Wahrheit*, founded as a socialistic daily, soon espoused the

cause of Jewish nationalism, though in its more radical phase of Labor Zionism. The *Forverts* for a time kept aloof from this hersey, but toward the end of the period, it too bowed to necessity and showed favor at least to the Dispora type of nationalism, moved thereto, perhaps, by the fact that many of its writers belonged to the *Bund*.

This change brought about also a lessening of sensationalism in all departments, the informative as well as the literary. The numerous important events which took place in the Jewish world in those years aroused a demand on the part of the readers, many of whom were recent arrivals, for authentic and detailed news of Jewish life. The press, in order to satisfy this demand, began to display a more serious attitude towards news gathering. The *Morgen Journal* was the first to engage several correspondents in European centers as well as to arrange for news by cable. Other dailies followed its example, though slowly and in a lesser degree. Much improvement was evidenced in the literary department. This decade also saw, due to the above-named factors, a great increase in Yiddish periodicals, especially weeklies, and among them, some of the literary type. Especially noteworthy was the appearance of several weeklies devoted to Jewish humor. In 1908 there began to appear, first as a monthly, later as a weekly, *Der Kibitzer*, a humorous publication founded and edited by Joseph Tunkel, a poet, humorist, and also a cartoonist. Besides periodic humorous essays, it also contained stories and cartoons. It made a deep impression upon the readers, and in 1910 another humorous publication *Der Kundes* appeared. With all their success, these publications did not manage to survive for a very long time. The first existed for seven years, up to 1915, and the second for a much longer period to 1927, but it, too, finally had to suspend publication. They did, however, help to introduce humor into the daily and weekly publications where henceforth it became an important feature.

4. Third Period.

The span of time from 1914 to 1928 can be considered the heyday of the Yiddish press in this country in all its phases: extent of circulation, economic position, and qualitative character. The war not only brought to this country a new stream of immigrants of a high cultural calibre, but also a number of first grade Jewish writers as trained propagandists experienced in the management of organizations and the leadership of movements. Furthermore, it aroused great interest on the part of the readers in all events going on in the Jewish world as well as in the interpretation of these events from a Jewish point of view. Besides, the

effect which this World War had upon the large centers of Jewish population, their partial destruction, and their economic plight, posed a number of grave problems to American Jewry which, volens nolens, had to assume leadership in Jewish matters. This resulted in the undertaking of an extensive relief action, the Congress movement, and, after the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, in an intense interest in Zionism. The outcome of all this stir was a heightening of Jewish life and an intensifying of Jewishness.

The effect of these conditions upon the press was of a manifold character. First, there was an increase in circulation, which in turn led to the appearance of new dailies. Thus at the end of 1914 there began to appear in New York, through the efforts of a group of well-meaning public-minded Jews, the daily paper, *Der Tog*, which aimed to set a higher standard for Jewish journalism. It announced itself as a Jewish daily imbued with the national spirit, but non-partisan, aiming to enlighten the readers on all Jewish matters in an objective way and to supply them with good reading and literary material. It still continues in existence, and though it is now run as a private enterprise, it still clings to its program to a fair degree. In addition, there were founded the dailies, *Die Yiddishe Welt* in Philadelphia and *Der Yiddisher Journal* in Toronto, and also a number of weeklies. The new publications did not in any way diminish the circulation of the old dailies which reached their height during the period. At one time the *Forverts* reached a circulation above 200,000.

The increasing circulation was accompanied by economic success which in turn contributed to the raising of the standard of the press. With ample funds at their disposal, the publishers and the editors did allocate some for the improvement of their papers in various departments. First, efforts were made to satisfy the demands of their readers for authentic news and its interpretation. The *Morgen Journal* was again the first to lead in this improvement. It established a telegraphic news bureau in London in addition to having expert correspondents in various Jewish centers in Europe and Palestine. The example was soon imitated by other dailies. Soon, too, several enterprising journalists established in London the "Jewish Telegraphic Agency," which shortly after its founding moved to New York where it serves the entire Yiddish press.

The deep interest in Jewish life and its problems called forth a need for essays on the views and attitudes of various movements as well as

the solutions they offer to the burning questions in Jewish life. That need was filled by the press which allocated considerable space to these subjects which were written on by experts in such matters, many of them former leaders and workers in these movements in Europe. Nor were general social and political questions neglected. The Russian Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet regime which affected the fate of millions of Jews in Russia found repercussions in the Yiddish press. The conservative dailies attacked communism vigorously while of the radically inclined dailies, the *Forverts* for several years was favorable to it, though it soon turned against it, and the *Tog* maintained a more objective attitude.

Consequently, numerous essays and articles were published in the Yiddish dailies and weeklies dealing with various phases of this revolutionary movement and its effects upon life, pro and con. It is unnecessary to amplify that there were numerous followers of the communistic views among Jews as well as among Americans in general. For a time, these endeavored to give expression to their attitude in the existing press, but ultimately they founded their own organ, the daily *Freiheit* which is still in existence. At first it assumed a bitter polemic tone, vociferously and viciously attacking all other views, especially the traditional, but it later became more dignified and moderate.

The interest in Zionism and other phases of Jewish nationalism displayed by the majority of the readers brought about a corresponding interest by the press. All dailies, with the exception of the *Freiheit*, devoted much space to news, articles, and essays on the various aspects of these movements. In general, it can be said that with the single exception mentioned, the entire daily press supported Zionism, each paper emphasizing according to its inclination a certain phase whether the rightist Mizrachi view, or the leftist Labor Zionists' conception, or the general Zionist policy.

A great improvement was evident in the fiction section. The sketches and novels, which were always an important feature of the Yiddish press, assumed, during the war and post-war periods, a literary character of high quality. It was to a large extent due to the general improvement of the taste of the new type of readers, recent immigrants who were already nourished on a high calibre press in the countries they came from, and partly to the numerous able Yiddish writers who settled in this country during the time and were engaged by various dailies. Such men as Shalom Aleichem, Sholom Asch, Abraham Reisin,

H. Leiwick, and many others contributed much towards the raising of the literary standard of the press. Soon there arose younger writers who displayed talent in the various phases of belles lettres, poetry, and prose, and they, too, contributed their share.

An important factor in the continuous rise of the calibre of the press was the transfer of the above-mentioned Yiddishist movement and its underlying philosophy to these shores by the later stratum of immigrant intellectual and literary forces. This movement began to develop in the East-European centers immediately after the Yiddishist conference in Chernowitz in 1908, at which Yiddish was declared to be the national language, or at least, one of two such languages. It struck root there, and through the adoption of this standpoint by the powerful socialist organization, *Der Bund*, developed into a wide movement. Conditions were different here, yet there was sufficient ground for its spread in this country as well, especially among the radical socialistic circles who slowly dropped their assimilationist tendencies and veered toward the point of view of a Diaspora nationalism (see above p. 891). The movement found expression in the founding of several systems of Yiddishist secular schools for children. Inevitably, most of the Yiddishist writers, with the exception of the few who were leading contributors to such middle class papers as the *Tageblatt* and the *Morgen Journal*, espoused this philosophy. And the more the adjustment of the masses to the environment increased, the more English, the language of the land, penetrated into all phases of Jewish life and into all strata of Jewish society, the stronger became the determination, on the part of the writers and the intellectuals, to maintain the position of Yiddish and endow it with literary dignity in order to make it a significant factor in cultural life. It is no wonder, then, that the press, both writers and editors, and to a degree also the publishers, adopted this policy and endeavored to make the press, which was the chief reading matter of a large number of Jews, as excellent in all phases as possible. Books began to be produced in large numbers, but the circle of their readers remained limited, while the Yiddish press is still read by hundreds of thousands.

5. *The Last Period (1928-1945)*

There is really little new in the nature and character of the Jewish press during the last two decades. The changes which took place in its situation are all of a material nature, notably a decline in circulation and a shrinkage in quantity. These changes were caused by the lessening of immigration during the period, the years of economic depression, and

above all, by the fact that English is increasingly becoming the vernacular of the Jews of America.

The decline in circulation caused a number of dailies which could not withstand the economic difficulties it entailed to cease publication. Especially hard hit by the decline were the organs of the middle class, for that class was more influenced by the conditions of adjustment than any other, and when the older generation of Yiddish readers began to die out, few of the younger generation of that class took their place. It thus happened that in 1928 the oldest Yiddish daily, the *Tageblatt*, closed its doors. In later years, the dailies in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and still later, the *Yiddisher Courier* of Chicago ceased publication. Simultaneously with the decline of the dailies a number of weeklies in provincial cities also closed their doors.

There still remain three dailies, all published in New York: the socialistic *Forverts*, the liberally minded middle-class organ *Tog-Morgen Journal*, and the communistic *Freiheit*. With the exception of the last named, their economic situation, though impaired, is not threatened, for the circulation is still quite large. As for the *Freiheit*, it is kept up more by the devotion of the followers of its ideology than by the circulation. All except the *Freiheit* are, in spite of difference of viewpoint, on the whole, saturated with a spirit of intense Jewishness and permeated with the nationalist idea and favorable in varying degrees to Zionism. As a result, they reflect Jewish life, its movements, problems, and attempted solutions in a satisfactory manner.

Viewing the Yiddish press as an institution in Jewish life during the last three quarters of a century and attempting to estimate its value as a factor in the development of that life, we can say that it has performed important services to American Jewry. Notwithstanding its grave faults in the earlier period of its development, its merits outweigh its shortcomings. For the larger period of its existence, it has served as a link between Jewish life in European centers and the rising Jewry in this country by disseminating information about the events and happenings in world Jewish life. It has also helped many of the intellectual leaders and writers to settle in this country by supplying them both with a living and the means of expression. Thus it has increased the intellectual and spiritual reservoir of American Jewry, which has enabled it ultimately to take a leading place in world Jewish affairs. On the economic side, the press, which was in a large measure socialistic, contributed greatly to the improvement of the material situation of the laboring masses by

helping them to organize in solid well established unions. The majority of the journals, dailies and weeklies, have championed, at least during the last two decades, the national idea and much of the spread of Zionism and its strength are due to its endeavors. The conservative press especially and even some of the mildly radical journals have helped to strengthen Jewish education in all its aspects, the former championing the traditional phase and significantly contributing to its marked improvement. The conservative press has also to its credit the strengthening of religious spirit during the last three decades by helping the representatives of orthodoxy to carry on an extensive activity in various fields. On the literary side, the press did much to develop a respectable Yiddish literature in this country.

There are, of course, shadows in this generally bright picture, such as the fact that some of the dailies lack critical discernment in their support of certain questionable activities and often neglect to rally behind more beneficial and useful movements, thus helping to direct several phases of Jewish life into wrong channels. But institutions like the press should be judged by the greater part of their activities.

Of the host of Yiddish journalists who participated in the development of the press during the seventy-five years of its existence, we will mention only those who occupied or still occupy a more or less prominent place. Of the many editors the following seven are the outstanding: Philip Kranz (real name Jacob Rombo, d. 1923), John Palei (1871-1907), Louis Miller, S. Yanowsky, Perez Wiernik, Jacob Fishman, and Abraham Cahan. Of these only Cahan is still living.

Kranz whose editorial activity falls in the nineties of the last century can be considered a real pioneer in the improvement of the Yiddish radical or party press. Bred in the European socialistic atmosphere, he endeavored to propagate his ideals in a clear and logical manner leavened with a scientific spirit adjusted to popular taste. Palei, on the other hand, was inclined to sensationalism and lacked stability. He adjusted himself too easily to the views of his employers. For seven years he edited the *Tageblatt* and championed the cause of orthodox tradition, though personally he was far from it. He was a prolific writer and distinguished himself especially in polemic articles and editorials.

Louis Miller (d. 1925), one of the early leaders of the Jewish proletarian masses and an energetic propagandist of the socialistic ideal, for a time made Yiddish journalism merely an avocation, but for ten years, from 1905 to 1916, during which period he edited the *Warheit*, he de-

voted himself entirely to journalism. He was a facile writer and his editorials had a broad popular appeal. In general, he was inclined to opportunism and frequently violated his own principles in his editorial policy. To his credit, though, should be placed the fact that he employed a number of able journalists, essayists, and short story writers who helped to raise the level of the daily press.

S. Yanowsky labored for many years in Jewish journalism as both writer and editor of several weeklies. His chief work was done in *Die Freie Arbeiter Stimme* during the last two decades of his life. Though an extreme radical inclined towards anarchistic views, he was tolerant enough to others, and in his weekly he encouraged writers to express their views. He also set a higher literary standard for his organ and thus helped to improve the general level of the press.

The leading figure among the creators of the radical press is Abraham Cahan (for his characterization as a writer see above p. 999f.) who has edited the *Forverts* for a period of forty-three years. It is due largely to his efforts as editor that this daily became the most popular of all Yiddish journals. He orientated himself adroitly in gauging the views, tastes, and aspirations of his readers and adjusted himself to them. Simultaneously, he endeavored to educate the readers and gradually develop their taste for better content. He introduced a number of features, engaged the services of able writers, especially well known fiction writers, and enlarged the news department. He himself contributed, besides the editorials, articles and essays in several fields, especially in literary criticism. Though one of the popular leaders in the Jewish socialistic movement, he has been keenly aware of the changing attitudes in Jewish life, and has accordingly modified the policy of the daily from that of a strict party paper to one which follows a general broad Jewish policy without losing its distinctive radical quality.

Perez Wiernik and Jacob Fishman for many years guided the destinies of the conservative daily *Morgen Journal*. The first, a man of considerable Jewish knowledge as well as of secular culture, for years championed the causes of Jewish tradition, advocated the Americanization of the immigrant, and gave voice to a conservative attitude in general politics in staid editorials, written in a terse style. Besides, he also contributed a weekly survey of Jewish literary productions in several languages in an objective and critical manner.

Fishman was essentially a keen journalist who felt that the primary function of a daily paper is to furnish ample information of the events

going on in both general and Jewish life. It was due to his efforts, first as managing editor and later as editor of the *Morgen Journal* that the manifold of Jewish life and events was reflected in this daily in a full and accurate manner. It was he who pioneered in engaging correspondents in all important Jewish centers and in fuller news coverage and its interpretation. As a leader of Zionism in this country, he not only gave to the affairs of this movement and to Jewish life in general ample space in the daily, but also interpreted them in the column which for many years he conducted judiciously and with ability.

The following names should also be noted: the publicist and essayist, Isaac Hurwitch, a leading writer on social and economic questions; B. Goren (Isaac Goide), a dramatic critic; Joel Entin, M. Katz, and D. Hermalin, popular short essay writers; and H. Rogoff, able interpreter of socialistic theory and American life as well as a literary critic. All these to a large extent represent the radical school in Jewish life.

To the non-partisan group of writers belong such figures as L. Zolotkoff, editor of the *Tageblatt* for several years and of the *Yiddisher Courier* in Chicago; the prolific G. Zelikowitz (see above p. 159) who labored in many fields; L. Kesner, and William Edlin. To the nationalistic group belong Ephraim Kaplan, a champion of Jewish tradition and Zionism; Nahman Sirkin, propounder of Labor Zionism and learned writer on weighty social problems; K. Marmor, for many years editor of the *Der Yiddisher Kempfer*, a Poale Zion organ, who later shifted to a communistic attitude; David Pinski, distinguished novelist (p. 1016); Abraham Goldberg, essayist and propounder of Zionism; Dr. S. Berenstein, editor of *Dos Yiddishe Folk*; Hayyim Greenberg, trenchant writer on Labor Zionism, literature, and social problems who raised the weekly, *Der Kempfer*, to a very high standard; and L. Mekler, present editor of the *Morgen Journal*, whose skillful editorials shed much light upon Jewish affairs, and who otherwise distinguished himself with his Hassidic stories.

Of the writers who have come to the front in recent days, such men as the following should be mentioned: H. Liberman whose essays and articles are saturated with a deep spirit of religiosity; A. Mukdoni (Al Kopel), a keen publicist and a pungent literary critic whose essays are distinguished both by style and content; Aaron Zeitlin, a writer of note, whose surveys of views and opinions in the press and monthly publications and whose historical articles are presented in a lucid and interesting manner; and Dr. S. Margoshes, for a time editor of *Der*

Tog, publicist and columnist, whose observations on Jewish problems display judiciousness and learning.

Literary criticism was made a specialty by the well known historian of Yiddish literature, S. Niger (above p. 563) whose reviews appear weekly in *Der Tog*, and also by Dr. H. L. Gordon, whose forte is the survey in the *Morgen Journal* of Jewish scholarly works, a function which he discharges with learning and skill.

The novelists and short story writers are, on the whole, well known persons in the field of fiction, including such men as Shalom Asch, Abraham Reisin, J. D. Berkowitz, and Zalman Sheneor. A number of writers have distinguished themselves as humorists. The outstanding names among these are those of M. Nadir (above p. 1020), J. Adler (pseud. B. Kovner), N. Gottesfield, J. Tunkel, and the talented H. Guttman (pseud. Der Lebediger), whose keen humor displayed in his feuilletons and witty literary parodies delight the reader.

B. Hebrew Press

The Hebrew press in this country is practically as old as the Yiddish, for its first weekly, *ha-Zofeh be-Eerez ha-Hadashah* (The Observer in a New Land), founded and edited by Zebi Hirsh Berenstein, appeared in 1871, only a year later than the *Yiddishe Zeitung*. In fact, even *The Post* and the *Hebrew News* which appeared, as mentioned (p. 1048ff.), in 1870, also had Hebrew supplements. But unlike its sister, the Yiddish press, its development was irregular, the extent of its influence upon life limited, and its circulation small. Consequently, its history can be divided into only two periods, from 1871 to 1909, and from that date to the present.

During the first period there was little demand for a Hebrew press. The bitter struggle of the recent immigrants for adjustment to environment dampened any ardor for cultural activity. Nor were the immigrants of the type capable of evincing a desire for literary material in that language. The need was felt only by a small number of lovers of the holy tongue, scattered throughout the country, who came to these shores saturated with Jewish knowledge and reared on the European Haskalah literature and its journals. It was therefore due only to the efforts of individuals, who, either from idealistic motives, or from a desire for self-expression, braved all hazards, that such a press was started and sporadically continued in spite of all obstacles and failures.

It is these conditions which, to a large degree, determined the charac-

ter of that press. In fact, it continued the tradition of the European Hebrew press of the late Haskalah period. It was conservative in policy, imbued with reverence for tradition and Jewish nationalism, and designed to afford to writers expression in all literary phases—fiction, poetry, and publicistic and scholarly essays. It also strove to convey information on Jewish affairs throughout the world and to interpret them in the proper spirit. It also possessed a propagandistic angle, inasmuch as it aimed to arouse a love for the Hebrew language, to improve Jewish education, and, in general, to increase cultural activities. That it did not succeed in its endeavors and that the literary level of that press was not high was due to conditions prevailing in this country and to the scarcity of literary talent. Most of the editors and writers, with few exceptions, were trained in the old school of Haskalah literature and considered dextrous manipulation of Biblical euphemistic phrases as literary writing of high caliber irrespective of the content. And while in the European centers of Hebrew literature new winds were blowing and younger writers, breaking old forms and introducing new ones, were making their appearance, the American writers followed the trodden path. From time to time, though, some well-known European writers and scholars contributed to the various weeklies and thus the standard was raised to a degree.

Turning to the difficulties of this press in its struggle for existence, we note the indefatigable efforts of daring spirits who time and again attempted to publish Hebrew weeklies in spite of continuous failures. During the first period, fifteen or more weeklies and several monthlies appeared, but most of them were short-lived. The leading publications were the above-mentioned *ha-Zofeh*, the *ha-Kol*, the *ha-Leumi*, the *ha-Pisgah*, the *ha-Ibri*, the *Ner Maarabi*, and the *ha-Leom*.

The *ha-Zofeh*, edited by Berenstein, existed for six years (1870-1876), and during its existence battled violently for Hebrew culture in this country and for the defense of traditional Judaism against the tide of Reform. It also devoted considerable space to literature and counted among its contributors well-known European writers, such as Solomon Buber (Vol. III, p. 431) and the poet, A. B. Gottlob. The *ha-Kol*, founded and edited by Michael Levi Radkinson, existed for several years. Its editor, a veteran Hebrew journalist, who had previously published in various cities of Western Europe several journals devoted to the socialistic idea, followed a neutral policy in his journal, and was even favorable to the Reform wing in Jewry. The editor of the *ha-*

Leumi, Ephraim Deinard, who had already distinguished himself in Russia as a belligerent writer and severe critic of certain trends in Jewish life, displayed a similar attitude in his publication in this country. He vigorously defended the nascent Zionist movement and bitterly attacked all its opponents as well as current assimilationist tendencies. He was successful in obtaining the cooperation of a number of European writers who contributed from time to time various literary features to the *ha-Leumi*.

The *ha-Pisgah* was the most distinguished of the weeklies. Its founder and editor, Zeb Wolf Schur (above p. 1050) who gained his spurs as a writer in the leading European Hebrew publications, possessed a strong love for Hebrew culture along with an aggressive character. These characteristics stood him in good stead in his persistence in the publication of the *ha-Pisgah*. Its first appearance in 1889 was of short duration. He renewed the publication again in 1890 and continued it for three years till 1893, in several cities, New York, Boston, and Baltimore. After an interruption of six years, he began to publish it again, this time in Chicago where it appeared for a number of years. Its journalistic and literary levels were comparatively high. Schur's policy was aggressive and his reaction to trends in Jewish life was both critical and constructive. As a devoted lover of Zion, he agitated continuously for the movement and urged its spread in this country. He even suggested as early as 1890 the establishment of a Hebrew University in Jerusalem, following in this case Hermañ Shapiro, the father of this idea. Numerous European writers contributed stories, poems, and essays to the literary department, and it has to its credit that Saul Tschernichowski, the famous Hebrew poet, made his debut in its pages.

The *ha-Ibri* (1882-1898) and the *ha-Leom* (1902-1909) were, on the whole, of an inferior quality. The first founded by K. Sarasohn and edited by himself and others, including the satirist, G. Rosenzweig (above p. 1050f.), had no definite policy, and its literary quality was of the type of the earlier Haskalah periodicals. The founder and editor of the *ha-Leom* was Moses Goldman, a Hebrew teacher, a man of little literary ability. Though he had as his assistants several immigrant writers, such as the late Dr. Wernikowsky and others, the weekly had no policy and its literary side was weak.

During this period attempts were made to publish a number of monthlies. Most of them were of short duration. Of these there is to be noted the *Ner Maarabi* (The Light of the West) which appeared

with interruptions from 1895-1899 but whose literary quality was comparatively high.

Casting a glance upon the accomplishment of the Hebrew press during its first period, we can say briefly that while its influence upon Jewish life was limited and its literary deposit not very significant, yet it performed a great service to American Jewry inasmuch as it kept the fire of Hebrew culture and literature burning in days of storm and stress, at a time when Judaism did not fare so well in this country. It laid the foundation for a larger and more intensive activity in later days. It is also to the credit of this press that it vigorously championed the cause of Jewish nationalism and Zionism in days when the masses were not only indifferent to these movements, but to a large degree, antagonistic, and it is due partly to this press that these movements struck root in the hard and unfruitful soil of a disorganized Jewish life. Last but not least, it is in this press that a number of American writers, who later made important contributions to Hebrew literature in this country, made their debut.

Things began to change in the second decade of this century. On the one hand, there was an increase in the number of Hebrew-knowing and Hebrew-loving Jews through the arrival of a new type of immigrant at the end of the first decade, among them a number of Hebrew writers and scholars. On the other hand, with the slackening of the struggle for existence, there arose a fairly well established middle class who began to be interested in the improvement of Jewish education and who sought ways and means to make Jewish knowledge, including the Hebrew language, more accessible to the younger generation. Simultaneously, Zionism became a stronger movement and at least officially championed the spread of Hebrew culture. In addition, there was also the influence of the new settlement in Palestine where Hebrew became a spoken language. All these factors prepared the ground for a greater activity on behalf of the Hebrew language and its literature. Yet, in the first half of the second decade, the Hebrew press did not prosper. Attempts were made by the well known Hebrew writer, M. Ben Eliezer, to establish a literary weekly of a high calibre, entitled *Shibolim* (Ears of Grain), but its appearance was confined to only seven numbers. The indefatigable Moses Goldman made an attempt to publish a Hebrew daily, the *ha-Yom* (The Day), and he succeeded in issuing it for a half year and no more.

The real rise of the Hebrew press came with the first World War

which brought American Jewry to the front in Jewish affairs. The first swallow of the spring of the Hebrew press during the war years was the *ha-Deror* (The Swallow), established and edited by the famous Hebrew essayist and critic, Reuben Brainin (above p. 374f.). The content was literary indeed, yet it was only a harbinger of spring, for the *ha-Deror* too did not last for more than fifteen weeks. Soon, however, the *ha-Toren* (The Mast), was established in 1914 by the members of the *Ahieber*, a group of lovers of Hebrew, first as a monthly, and from 1915 on as a weekly. It was edited by J. D. Berkowitz, a distinguished short story writer (p. 108), for three years and for two years after that by Brainin. In 1920 it was again turned into a monthly and appeared until 1925. The literary level of the *ha-Toren*, both as a weekly and monthly, was very high. The best writers. European and American, enriched its columns.

Almost simultaneously with the appearance of the weekly, *ha-Toren*, there began to be published by the Mizrahi organization in 1916 another weekly, the *ha-Ibri*, edited by Meyer Berlin. It appeared without interruption for seven years. The policy, of course, was predetermined as it championed the religious type of Zionism, but its literary quality did not suffer by it. It devoted much space to literature in all phases, fiction, poetry, essays and criticism. Among its contributors there were illustrious names.

During the years of the First World War, the well known Maecenas of Hebrew literature, Abraham Joseph Stybel (d. 1947), had established the Hebrew monthly, *ha-Miklat* (The Place of Refuge), in New York under the editorship of J. D. Berkowitz. It appeared for a year. As its name indicates, it was intended to serve as a place of refuge for writers of talent, European and American, especially the former who, during the war had no place to continue their creative activity. It fulfilled its purpose, largely through the munificence of Stybel, for most of the poems, stories, and essays, or critical essays which were published there have permanent value. Its editorial policy was nationalistic but non-partisan, and the editorial comments on Jewish affairs were unbiased. The *Miklat* gave a great impetus to the development of Hebrew literature in this country, for the editor encouraged the younger native literary talents to make their debut as writers in its pages.

The years 1921-1922 with their business recession brought a crisis in the Hebrew press. The *ha-Ibri* ceased its publication and the *ha-Toren* was about to close its doors. It was, however, just at that time, at the

end of 1921, that M. Lipson, the managing editor of the *ha-Ibri*, undertook with the assistance of several idealistic business men who were lovers of Hebrew, to publish a daily, the *ha-Doar* (The Post). Its literary and journalistic level was high but the finances were low, and after a struggle of eight months it ceased to exist as a daily, but immediately reappeared as a weekly, and still continues to appear regularly.

Much of the success of this weekly which is today the pride and glory of the Hebraists is due to its able editor, Menaḥem Ribalow. Ribalow took over the *ha-Doar* in its infancy in 1923 and made the preservation of this weekly, and indirectly also that of the *Histadrut Ibrit* (The Hebrew Organization) his life work. With great energy and perseverance he carried on the battle for the existence and development of both. Conditions were favorable and today the *ha-Doar* is one of the leading Hebrew weeklies of the world. It champions all movements and trends in Jewish life which aim to strengthen Jewish tradition, culture, and nationalism; its editorials, written primarily by Ribalow in a terse and vigorous style, shed much light upon Jewish affairs. The greater part of the weekly is devoted to literature in all its aspects, fiction, poetry, scholarly essays, and criticism. From time to time, special enlarged editions of the weekly are published which contain much literary material and afford an opportunity to American Hebrew writers, the number of which has considerably increased during the years, for expression. In fact, many of these writers not only made their debut, but also gained their spurs in the columns of the *ha-Doar*. The *ha-Doar* also publishes a bi-weekly supplement for younger readers, entitled *ha-Doar la-Noar*, which is ably edited by Daniel Persky (above p. 1081f.). In addition, the *Histadrut* also publishes an annual devoted to literature, scholarship, and Jewish affairs, called *Sefer ha-Shanah* which is edited by Ribalow. Thus this weekly with the other publications connected with and concentrated around it has become an important institution and the leading factor in the promotion and development of Hebrew culture and literature in this country.

Since the end of 1939 there also appears a Hebrew monthly *Bitzaron* (The Stronghold), founded and edited by the well known scholar and historian of Halakah, Ḥayyim Tschernowitz. It is of a high literary level and contains all departments of literature, and is particularly distinguished by essays and studies of a scholarly nature of which those of the editor himself are especially noted.

There are also a number of publications devoted to special subjects.

Worthy of mention are the *Shebilé ha-Hinuk* (Paths of Education) and the *ha-Rofe ha-Ibri*. The first was published for a number of years as a bi-monthly, and edited by the veteran pedagogue and philosopher of education, Nisan Turow, and later by the late B. Maximon. It appears now as a quarterly edited by the educator and author of numerous text books, Zebi Scharfstein and A. Epstein. The second is a semi-annual, and as its name indicates, devoted mainly to medical subjects and partly also to medical terminology. It is edited by Moses Einhorn. There is also a quarterly, *Talpiot*, devoted to studies in Halakah, Jewish law and ethics, edited by S. K. Mirsky and L. Sar.

Note—In the preparation of the two surveys, the writer utilized to a great extent the work of the late J. Chaikin, *Yiddishe Bletter in America*, New York, 1946, and the essay of A. Malachi, *Shibim we-Hamesh Shanah le-litonit ha-Ibrit be-America* in *Sefer ha-Shenah*, Vols. VIII, IX.

C

THE ANGLO-JEWISH PRESS

The Anglo-Jewish press has a longer history than either of its sisters, the Yiddish and the Hebrew press, for as stated above (p. 965), as early as 1823 Henry Jackson began to publish and edit a monthly entitled *The Jew*. It appeared irregularly until 1825. It had no successors until 1843 when Isaac Leeser (p. 1088) established his monthly, *The Occident*. From that time on to the present hundreds of weeklies and many monthlies have appeared.

On the whole, its long history can be divided into two periods—from the year of its inception to 1900, and from that year to the present day. During the first period, its influence on Jewish life was considerably limited, and its literary level, with few exceptions, low, for the following reasons. First, the weeklies bore a local character and aimed primarily to register the social and religious events of the community or communities which they served, with a meager interspersing of general Jewish news. Second, this press, during that span of time was, on the whole, a class press, namely the organ of expression of the wealthier and more adjusted elements of American Jewry whose numbers were small and whose interest in Jewish affairs was limited to religious matters. Third, the majority of the editors of this press were Rabbis, most of whom belonged to the Reform wing, and they utilized these organs to defend this type of Judaism, often by means of long sermons. Under these circumstances it was only natural that the scope of these periodicals should be circumscribed, and that the various movements

and tendencies in Jewish life seldom found expression in their columns.

However, a number of periodicals formed exceptions to this rule and attained a high literary and scholarly quality. The most distinguished of these was the monthly, *The Occident*, published and edited by Leiser for thirty years in which Jewish life in general and the American in particular was adequately reflected. This was especially true of the struggle between the standard type of Judaism and the new liberal or Reform tendency. The former was ably defended by the editor, while the position of the latter was voiced by Isaac Meir Wise (p. 1091) and other champions of the movement. The monthly also frequently published literary essays and scholarly studies. Among the more noted weeklies of the period were the *American Israelite* and the *American Hebrew*. The first was founded by Isaac Meir Wise in 1854 and edited by him for many years. It was, of course, the organ of Reform Judaism, but it maintained a fair literary standard. The second was founded in 1879 and for a number of decades ably championed the conservative tendency in Judaism, but later changed this attitude.

Conditions began to change with the beginning of the present century. The Americanization of large Jewish masses, the rise of a young generation whose native tongue is English, the great changes which took place in Jewish life from the beginning of World War I on, the spread of Zionism, and the role of leadership assumed by American Jewry—all these factors affected the character of this Anglo-Jewish press to a very great extent. They began to reflect Jewish life in this country and abroad in a fair measure, to report Jewish news items in adequate manner, as well as to interpret and elucidate them properly, and to publish articles and essays dealing with various trends and movements in Jewish life in an objective manner. With few exceptions the Jewish weeklies and monthlies are, and for the last two decades have been favorable to Jewish nationalism. As a result of both the changes in the life of American Jewry and in the character of the periodicals the influence of the Anglo-Jewish press is continually on the increase.

While most of these periodicals still bear a local character, inasmuch as they serve certain communities or sections of the country, they have lost their provincialism, and a number of them, quarterlies, monthlies, and some weeklies have risen to the status of national organs. These are generally published by parties or organizations which have a definite point of view. However, since the parties and organizations are large and the policy of the journals is conducted on broad lines, they

have a general appeal.

To this group of periodicals belong: *The Menorah Journal*, published by the Menorah Association, formerly a Jewish Collegiate Organization, a quarterly of high literary and scholarly quality; *The National Monthly*, published by the Order of Bnai Brith; *The American Zionist* and *The Commentary*, published by the Zionist Organization and the American Jewish Committee, respectively; *The Jewish Forum*, edited by I. Rosengarten, which champions traditional Judaism; *The Jewish Frontier*, organ of the Labor Zionists; and *The National Jewish Post*, edited by Gabriel Cohen.

A number of publications are devoted to special subjects. Such are: *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, edited by A. Neuman and S. Zeitlin; *Jewish Education*, published by Jewish Teachers' Association; and the *Jewish Social Studies*.

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